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PICTURES OF RHODE ISLAND  
IN THE PAST.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR  
THE EAST INDIA TRADE OF  
PROVIDENCE 17<sup>87</sup> TO 1807

PICTURES OF RHODE ISLAND  
IN THE PAST

1642-1833

BY  
TRAVELLERS AND OBSERVERS

EDITED BY  
GERTRUDE SELWYN KIMBALL

PROVIDENCE R. I.  
PRESTON AND ROUNDS CO.

1900

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## INTRODUCTION.

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Nothing is more characteristic of American life, in the present or in the past, than the rapidity with which the face of the country is transformed by the hand of man. Wheatfields and orchards stand now where ten years ago were only the prairie or the forest. The mission of American mankind (a mission more inspiring and more ideal than we are apt to suspect) has been "to go up against the land and possess it," and transform it. And yet, especially here in New England, how much remains from decade to decade unchanged! That strain of conservatism in the American blood, which jostles so oddly with its audacious energy and enterprise, has preserved for us, in these older communities, many of our material landmarks and still more of our traits of character. Very likely it is this mingling of change and of permanence which appeals to us with so constant a charm in old descriptions of New England or any of its regions. When we come across them in our reading, we are quickly interested to see how much, in the scenes which are familiar to us, is the product of change, how much has come down to us unaltered from earlier days. Most of us readers of books who dwell in Rhode Island have had the pleasure of encountering a few such descriptions of its former appearance and character. Miss Kimball has had the happy thought of extending and giving per-

manence to our pleasure by making a comprehensive collection of such descriptions. It is not unlikely that even the expert student of Rhode Island history will be surprised that she has found so many. Certainly they are from sources most varied in character, and show us Rhode Island, or Providence, or Newport, at many periods and from many points of view. Some of their writers are genuine Rhode Islanders, governors perhaps, like Sandford and Cranston, giving the home government information, not uncolored with patriotic purpose, respecting the colony. Some, though at the time of writing residents of Rhode Island, look upon it with the eyes of strangers—the kindly eyes of good Dean Berkeley, or the indignant orbs of the virtuous MacSparran. Some of our witnesses are clergymen, some soldiers. Some are geographers, like Dr. Jedidiah Morse. Some come upon official business, governors like Bellomont and Dudley striving to maintain order and the rights of the Crown; Capt. Chandler surveying boundaries, Hugh Finlay inspecting post-offices, Chief-Justice Horsmanden seeking the destroyers of the *Gaspee*. Mather the Puritan, Morgan Edwards the Baptist statistician, Robin the Catholic abbé, all have here their place and their right to be heard. An especially interesting group is that of the French officers who came with Rochambeau, and whose amiable views of republican America were not without their influence in a later Revolution. Most interesting and instructive of all, perhaps, are those who travelled through Rhode Island simply for the sake of travelling, from Madam Sarah Knight, the Boston school-

mistress, to President Dwight and the Duke of La-Rochefoucauld-Liancourt.

Miss Kimball has made no effort to suppress criticisms of Rhode Island. To see ourselves as others see us is recommended to us all as salutary, and certainly is always entertaining. At this distance of time we can listen with equal complacency and equal interest to the admirer of Rhode Island, to her detractor, and even to her "candid friend." Doubtless many readers will think the expressions of opinion respecting the inhabitants of Rhode Island quite as good reading as those passages which show us the ancient aspects of country and town.

The plan pursued by Miss Kimball has been to reprint the texts exactly, copying, in cases where there are several editions of a book, from the earliest accessible edition in which her extract is contained. The extracts are arranged in a chronological order, the date assigned to each being that of the year in which it was written rather than that in which it was published, if the two are known to differ. To each piece she has prefixed a short heading, intended to show who the author was, what was the point of view from which he looked at Rhode Island, or under what circumstances he wrote. The source whence the text is derived is scrupulously stated, for Miss Kimball has desired that the book should be, as I am sure it will be, of use and value to careful historical students, as well as a source of entertainment to those who love to read Rhode Island history "with their feet on the fender."

J. FRANKLIN JAMESON.



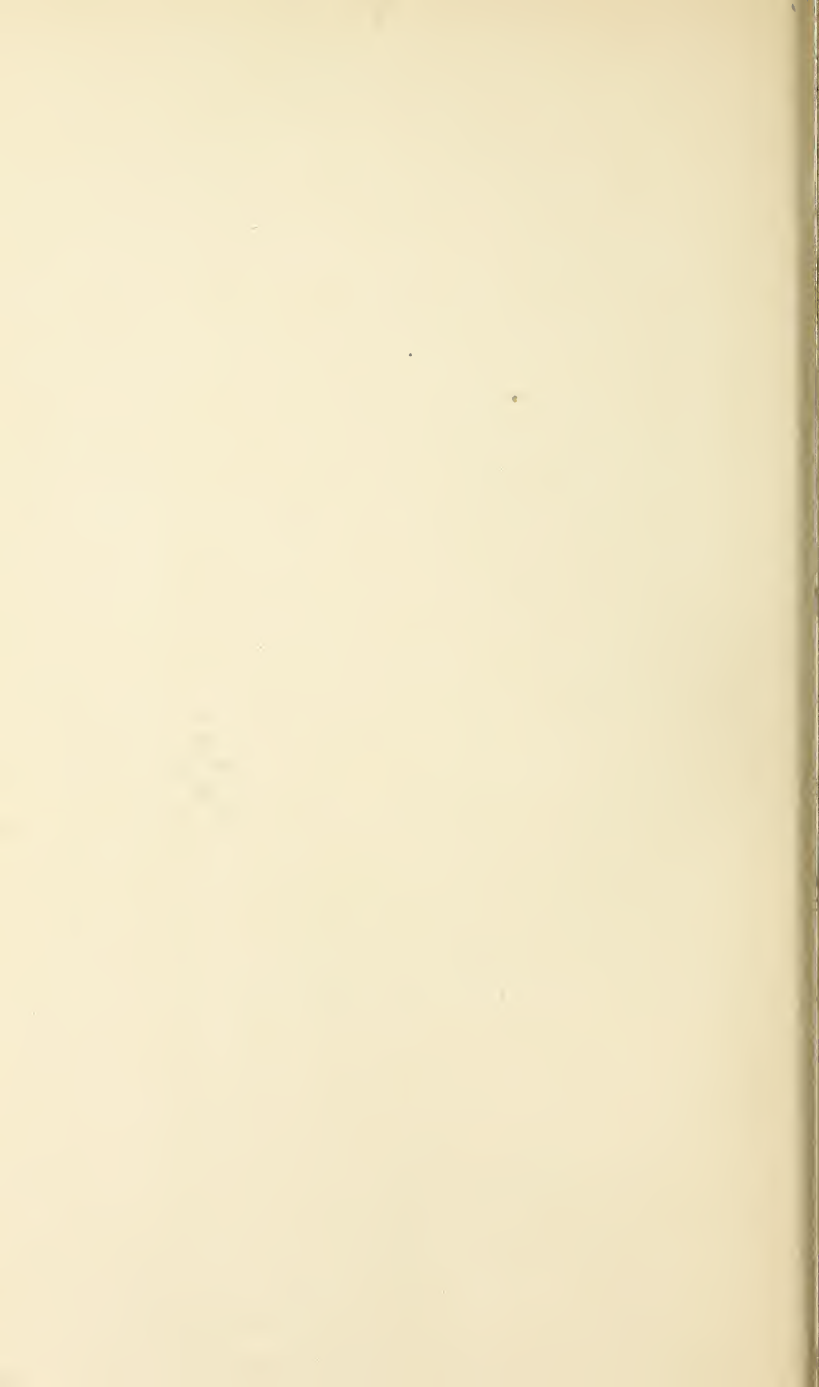
## PREFACE.

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Many of the volumes examined in the work of preparing this little book have, necessarily, been somewhat scattered and difficult of access, and it gives me pleasure to take advantage of this opportunity to thank those to whom I am indebted for assistance in this work of preparation. Much valuable material was found in the John Carter Brown Library, in this city, and the kind courtesy of the librarian, Mr. G. P. Winship, calls for a grateful acknowledgment. The late Mr. Amos Perry, Mr. William E. Foster, and Mr. Sidney S. Rider, of Providence, have furnished valuable information respecting biographical material.

To Professor W. Whitman Bailey and to Mr. Albert V. Jencks I am indebted for the loan of rare books, while to the kind advice and assistance of Dr. J. F. Jameson, of Brown University, the volume owes no small amount of whatever merit it may possess.

GERTRUDE SELWYN KIMBALL.





## PICTURES OF RHODE ISLAND IN THE PAST.

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1642. Thomas Lechford.

Thomas Lechford describes himself as “a student or practiser at law.” In 1637 he fell under the ban of Archbishop Laud, and, he tells us, “suffered imprisonment and a kind of banishment.” The next year he came to Boston, where he was regarded with distrust by those in authority, on account of both his profession and his doctrine. In 1641 he left New England and returned to London, where his book was written and published. Cotton, in his “Way Cleared,” says that he “put out his Book (such as it is) and soon after dyed.” The extract given is taken from this book—*Plain Dealing: or, News from New-England*, ed. 1867, pp. 93–97.

At the Island called Aquedney, are about two hundred families. there was a Church, where one master *Clark* was Elder: The place where the Church was, is called *Newport*, but that Church, I heare, is now dissolved; as also divers Churches in the Country have been broken up and dissolved through dissention. At the other end of the Island there is another towne called *Portsmouth*, but no Church: there is a meeting

of some men, who there teach one another, and call it Prophesie. These of the Island have a pretended civill government of their owne erection, without the Kings Patent.

At *Providence*, which is twenty miles from the said Island, lives master *Williams*, and his company of divers opinions ; most are Anabaptists ; they hold there is no true visible Church in the *Bay*, nor in the world, nor any true Ministerie. This is within no Patent, as they say ; but they have of late a kind of government also of their owne erection.

One master *Blakeston*, went from *Boston*, having lived there nine or ten yeares, because he would not joyne with the Church ; he lives neere master *Williams*, but is far from his opinions.

## 1660. Samuel Maverick.

Samuel Maverick (1602–c. 1668) came to America in 1624, and settled on Boston Bay where Chelsea now is. He was a man of good family, well educated, intelligent, and justly celebrated for his hospitality “to all Comers *gratis*.” After the Restoration, Maverick returned to England, and was appointed one of the four members of the Commission of 1664. The path of the Commission, in New England, was not one of peace. Maverick bore his part in the struggle with the contumacious colony, but made New York his permanent residence. This extract is taken from his account of New England, recently discovered, and printed in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d Series, I. 243.

*Rhode Island.* This island is about ffouerteen miles Long, in some places 3 or 4 miles Broad, in other lesse. It is full of people haveing been a receptacle for people of severall Sorts and Opinions. There was a Patent granted to one Coddington for the Government of this Island, and Warwick and Providence two Townes which lye on the maine, and I think they still keepe a seeming forme of Government but to litle purpose, none submitting to Supream Authority but as they please.

## 1665. Colonel Richard Nicolls and Others.

Richard Nicolls (1624–1672) was the first English governor of New York. An adherent of the Stuart cause, he followed his King into exile, and obtained substantial preferment in England, after the Restoration. In 1664 he was appointed military commiander of an expedition to inquire into the condition of New England—and incidentally to acquire the Dutch territory along the Atlantic seaboard.

As a matter of fact, the other members of the Commission (Sir Robert Carr, George Cartwright and Samuel Maverick) carried out the regulation of New England, while Nicolls was chiefly concerned with the reorganization of the province of New York. This description of Rhode Island is an extract from the Report of the King's Commissioners concerning the New England Colonies, made December, 1665, and is found in Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, II. 127, 129.

The Colony of Road Island and Providence Plantations returned their humble thanks to his Majestie for sending Commissioners, and made great demonstrations of their loyalty and obedience.

They approved as most reasonable that appeales should be made to his Majesties Commissioners, who having heard and determined some causes among them, referred other, some in civility to their generall Court, and some to the Governour, and others, some of which causes they againe remitted to the Commissioners to be determined.

All proceedings in justice are in his Majesties name.

They admitt all to be freemen who desire it.

They allow liberty of conscience and worship to all who live civilly.

And if any can informe them of any thing in their lawes or practice, derogatory to his Majesties honour, they will amend it.

The Nanyhygansett Bay is the largest and safest port in New England, nearest the sea, and fittest for trade.

This Colony hath two scattered townes upon Road Island, two upon the maine land, and four small villages.

Here only yet is Limestone found, and here only the Governour and magistrates serve the publick at their own charges. In this Colony is the greatest number of Indians, yet they never had anything allowed towards the civilizing and converting of the Indians. And in this Colony they have the greatest plaines, but no place of strength fortified, though many places capable of fortification.

In this Province, also, is the best English grasse, and most sheepe, the ground very fruitfull, ewes bring ordinarily two lambs; corn yields eighty for one, and in some places, they have had corne twenty sixe yeares together without manuring.

In this Province only they have not any places set

apart for the worship of God, there being so many subdivided sects, they cannot agree to meet together in one place, but according to their severall judgments, they sometimes associate in one house, sometimes in another.

## 1668. Roger Williams.

The life and work of Roger Williams are too well known to need elucidation here. The letter cited may serve as an illustration of the kindliness and public spirit for which he was no less noted than for his love of liberty and his undaunted pugnacity in theological controversy. This letter is taken from Vol. VI. of the Publications of the Narragansett Club, *Letters of Roger Williams*, pp. 324, 325.

To my much respected the Inhabitants of the Town of Providence.

Providence, 10th February, 1667-8.

Loving Friends and Neighbors,—Unto this day, it pleased the town to adjourn for the answering of the bill for the bridge and others. I have conferred with Shadrach Manton and Nathaniel Waterman, about their proposal, and their result is, that they cannot obtain such a number as will join with them, to undertake the bridge upon the hopes of meadow. I am, therefore, bold, after so many anchors come home, and so much trouble and long debates and deliberations, to offer, that if you please, I will, with God's help, take this bridge unto my care, by that moderate toll of strangers of all sorts, which hath been mentioned; will maintain it so long that it pleaseth God that I live in this town.

1. The town shall be free from all toll, only I desire one day's work of one man in a year from every family, but from those that have teams, and have much use of the bridge, one day's work of a man and team, and of those that have less use, half a day.

3. I shall join with any of the town, more or few, who will venture their labor with me for the gaining of meadow.

4. I promise, if it please God, that I gain meadow in equal value to the town's yearly help, I shall then release that.

5. I desire if it please God to be with me, to go through such a charge and trouble as will be to bring this to a settled way, and then suddenly to take me from hence, I desire that before another, my wife and children, if they desire it, may engage in my stead to these conditions.

6. If the town please to consent, I desire that one of yourselves be nominated, to join with the clerk to draw up the writing.

ROGER WILLIAMS.\*

## 1680. Governor Peleg Sanford.

Peleg Sanford (1632–c. 1700) was prominent in various official positions. He was general treasurer of the colony under the Royal Charter, from 1678–1681, and upon the death of the governor, was elected

\* The Providence town meeting, on May 9, 1662, passed the following vote: "Ordred that A bridge be made over Moshosick River by Tho: Olney jun<sup>r</sup> his Dwelling howse; John Browne, Edward Smith, Thomas Harris jun<sup>r</sup>, John Steere, Epenetus Olney, Tho. Arnold, Tho: Olney jun<sup>r</sup>, and George palmer, are appointed to git the Timber of the said Bridge, and to fframe it, and then to give no-



by the General Assembly to fill the vacant place, in 1680. He was governor of Rhode Island until 1683. He also served his colony as agent to England, and served the mother-country in the capacity of judge of the Admiralty.

The following "Answer of Rhode Island to the Inquiries of the Board of Trade," the original of which is in the British Public Record Office, is here reprinted from Arnold's *History of Rhode Island*, I. 488.

Whereas wee the Governor and Councill of his Majesties Colloney of Rhoades Island and Providence Plantations received from your Lordships the Right Honorable, the Lords of his Majesties most Honorable Privy Councill, appointed a committee for Trade and Forreign Plantations certain heads of inquiry, subscribed by the honorable secretary William Blathwayt, in obedience to your Lordships commands requiring an answer thereunto; wee the Governor and Councill aforesaid accordinge to the best of our understandinge make answer as followeth, viz<sup>t</sup>.

To the first wee humbly answer that the Councells and Assemblies are stated accordinge to his Majesties appointment in his gracious letters Pattents, and our Courts of judicature are two in the yeare certain appointed accordinge to Charter, and are carried on by Judges and Jurors, accordinge to Law and Charter.

To the second, concerninge the court of Admiralty wee answer that wee have made provision to act accordinge to the Lawes of England as neare as the convenience unto the Surveiors, to warn the inhabetantes together to mend the high wayes, and then to rear the said bridge; and this bridge to be done before the next hay tyme". Primitive as all this sounds, the skill to build a bridge over our river between May and "hay tyme" would have been appreciated by many of us in 1898.

An inkstand made from one of the timbers of the old Weybosset bridge is in the Museum of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

stitution of our place will beare havinge but little occasion thereofe.

To the third wee answer that accordinge to our Charter the Legislative power is seated in our Generall Assemblies, and the executive power of the government is in our Courts of Trialls settled accordinge to Charter.

To the fourth wee answer that our Lawes are made accordinge to the Charter not repugnant but agreeable to the Lawes of England.

To the fifth wee answer, that as for Horse wee have but few, but the chief of our Militia consists of ten companys of foote, being Trayned Bands under one Generall Commander, and their arms are firelockes.

To the sixth, wee answer that in the late Indian warres wee fortified ourselves against the Indians as necessity required, but as for fortification against a Forreignemie, as yet wee have had no occasion but have made as good provision as at present wee are capacitated to doe.

To the seventh wee answer, that our coast is little frequented and not at all at this time with privateers or pirates.

To the eighth wee answer, as with respect to other Nations, that the French being seated at Canada and up the Bay of Funde are a very considerable number, as wee judge about two thousand, but as for the Indians, they are generally cut off by the late warr, that were inhabitinge our Colloney.

To the 9th wee answer, that as for Forreighners and Indians, we have no commerce with, but as for our neighbouringe English, wee have and shall endeavour to keepe a good correspondency with them.

To the 10th we answer as to the Boundaries of our Land within our Patent that our Charter doth declare the same viz—[extracts the bounds from the charter, and adds, “the greatest part of it uncultivated, and is about a degree as we conceive.”]



To the 11th wee answer that the principal town for trade in our Colloney is the Towne of Newport, that the generality of our buildinge is of timber and generally small.

To the 12th, That wee have nine towns or divisions within our Colloney.

To the 13th, That wee have several good Harbors in the Colloney of very good depth and soundinge, navigable for any shippinge.

To the 14th, That the principall matters that are exported amongst us, is Horses and provisions, and the goods chiefly imported is a small quantity of Barbadoes goods for supply of our families.

To the 15th, That as for Salt Peter we know of none in this Colloney.

To the 16th, Wee answer that wee have severall men that deale in buyinge and sellinge although they cannot properly be called Merchants, and for Planters wee conceive there are about five hundred and about five hundred men besides.

To the 17th, that we have had few or none either of English, Scots, Irish or Forreighners, onely a few blakes imported.

To the 18th, That there may be of Whites and Blakes about two hundred borne in a yeare.

To the 19th, That for marriages we have about fifty in a yeare.

To the 20th, That for burrials this seven yeares last past accordinge to computation amounts to foure hundred fifty and five.

To the 21st, That as for Merchants wee have none, but the most of our Colloney live comfortably by improving the wilderness.

To the 22d, That wee have no shippinge belonginge to our Colloney but only a few sloopes.

To the 23d, that the great obstruction concerninge

trade is the want of Merchants and Men of considerable Estates amongst us.

To the 24th, wee answer that a fishing trade might prove very beneficiall provided accordinge to the former artickle there were men of considerable Estates amongst us and willing to propagate it.

To the 25th, That as for goodes exported and imported, which is very little, there is no Custome imposed.

To the 26th, wee answer that those people that goe under the denomination of Baptists and Quakers are the most that publicly congregate together, but there are others of divers persuasions and principles all which together with them injoy their liberties accordinge to his Majesties gracious Charter to them granted, wherein all people in our Colloney are to enjoy their liberty of conscience provided their liberty extend not to licentiousnesse, but as for Papists, wee know of none amongst us.

To the 27th, That we leave every Man to walke as God shall perswade their hartes, and doe actively and passively yield obedience to the Civill Magistrate and doe not actively disturb the Civill peace and live peaceably in the Corporation as our Charter requires, and have liberty to frequent any meetings of worship for their better Instruction and information, but as for beggars and vagabonds wee have none amongst us; and as for lame and impotent persons there is a due course taken. This may further humbly informe your Lordships that our predecessors about forty years since left their native countrey and comfortable settlements there because they could not in their private opinions conform to the Lithurge, formes and ceremonies of the Church of England, and transported themselves and families over the Ocean seas to dwell in this remote wilderness, that they might injoy their liberty in their opinions, which upon application to his gracious Majesty

after his happy restoration did of his bountifull goodnesse graunt us a Charter full of liberty of conscience, provided that the pretence of liberty extend not to licentiousnesse, in which said Charter there is liberty for any person that will at their charges build Churches and maintaine such as are called Ministers without the least molestation as well as others.

In behalf and with the consent of the Councill, signed  
PELEG SANFORD, Governor.

Dated Newport on Road Island  
the eighth of May 1680.

## 1685. Edward Randolph.

Randolph (c. 1640–c. 1700) was the famous agent sent to New England by the home government in 1676, with instructions to obtain information as to the resources of, and state of feeling in, the colonies. In 1678 he was appointed collector and surveyor of customs in New England, and, in 1685, was made secretary and registrar of the province of New England. He also held office for the Crown in New York, and, it is stated, in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Cotton Mather says, in his *Parentator* (1724) that Randolph died in Virginia in great poverty. The paper quoted is taken from Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, III. 175, 176.

### *Articles of Misdemeanor against Rhode Island.*

To the Right Honorable the Lords of the Committee  
for Trade and Foreign Plantations.

Articles of high misdemeanors exhibited against the Governor and Company of the Collony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, by Edward Randolph.

1. They raise great sums of money upon the inhabitants of that Collony, and others by fines, taxes and arbitrary imprisonment, contrary to law, and deny appeals to his Majesty.

2. They make and execute laws contrary to the laws of England.

3. They deny his Majesty's subjects the benefits of the laws of England, and will not suffer them to be pleaded in their Courts.

4. They keep no authentick Records of their laws, neither will they suffer the inhabitants to have copys of them.

5. They raise and cancel their laws as they please, without the consent of the General Assembly.

6. Their Governor, Deputy Governor, Assistants, Deputys and other officers for the administration of justice, as well as juries and witnesses, are under no legal oaths.

7. They violate the acts of Trade, and have taken from Francis Brinley, Esq'r, his late Majesty's Commission, appointing the said Brinley and others to administer an oath to the Governor of that Collony, for his duly putting in execution the act of Trade and Navigation, made in the twelfth year of his late Majesty's reign; the Governor of that Collony not having taken the said oath these three or four years last past, as is required in the said act.

All of which is humbly submitted, &c.

1690. N. N.

The pamphlet from which this extract is taken was published anonymously, and has but recently come to light. It is not known who was the author. The work is entitled *A Short Account of the Present State of New England*.

The Names of the several Colonies and Provinces, are these that follow, *Road-Island, Plymouth, Narraganset Country, Connecticut, New-Hampshire*, Province of *Maine*, & the *Massachusetts-Colony*.

ROAD-ISLAND is of a considerable bigness, and justly called the *Garden of New-England*, for its Fertility and Pleasantness. It abounds with all things necessary for the life of Man, is excellent for Sheep, Kine and Horses; and being environed by the Sea, it is free'd from the dangers of Bears, Wolves and Foxes, which much molest and damnifie those that live on the Continent.

The People for some tract of time had a Charter to themselves, lived under a Governour of their own choosing, and Laws of their own making: But in year 1686, upon serving the *Quo Warranto*, they freely resigned up their Charter to His Majesty, and continue so well satisfied with the surrender, that they do not so much as petition for their Charter again. Here is a medley of most Perswasions, but neither Church nor Meeting-house, except one built for the use of the *Quakers*, who are here very numerous, and have annually a General Meeting from all Quarters.

Many of the others regard neither Time, nor Place, nor Worship; and even some very sober men have lived so long without it, that they think all instituted Religion useless.

The People live in great plenty, send Horses and Provisions to *Barbadoes*, and the *Leeward-Islands*, and sell great numbers of fat Oxen and Sheep to the Butchers of Boston.

The settlement of this Colony, was in this manner ; The People of *Boston*, who always had a perfect hatred against all those who differed in Opinion from them, had some *Quakers* in the Land ; and how to rid themselves fairly of these, they had many Consultations, which at last ended in this result ; They would banish them to some place or other, from whence they might be sure to be never troubled with them again : so they banish'd the *Quakers* to this Island, where in all probability they must have perish'd with hunger, or else been destroyed by the Heathens ; hither these poor people being come, dig themselves Caves in the earth, and by the kindness of the *Indians*, outlive the severity of a long and sharp Winter. The Spring coming on, they obtain'd leave from the *Sachem* to manure the ground, and in a little time wrought themselves into good Estates, which some even of the first settlers enjoy to this day. Being thus happily settled, they petitioned King *Charles II.* that they might have a Charter to themselves, fearing least they should fall under the lash of the *Bostoners* again, who had been so Inhumane and Barbarous to them in their banishment.

The *NARRAGANSETT* Countrey is a large tract of Ground, little inhabited, but the greatest part of the Country is taken up by several Persons. Some of the *Bostoners* claim a propriety for several miles together, but never take care to make the least Improvement. Churches here are none, and but a few Houses ; I cannot say there is one *English* Town in the whole Province. What is most considerable in the *Narragansett* Country, is the settlement of the *French Protestants* : who, on the violence of the Persecution, left their Country, came over to *New-England*, and took up their



habitation in this Wilderness ; where they have made good improvement, live comfortably, and have planted great numbers of Vines, which they say thrive well, and it is hoped will be very beneficial to them.

### 1699. Lord Bellomont.

Richard Coote, first Earl of Bellomont (1636–1701), was in 1695 appointed governor of New England, with a special mission to put down piracy and unlawful trading. The notorious Captain Kidd engaged his energies in the first-named sphere of duty, and Rhode Island seems to have claimed no small share of the Governor's attention so far as the regulation of unlawful trade was concerned. He visited Rhode Island in 1699, was most unfavorably impressed with the colony and its people, and in his Report his views are expressed in terms of unflinching sincerity. This "Report of the Earl of Bellomont on the Irregularities of Rhode Island" is taken from Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, III. 385–387.

Boston, November the 27th, 1699.

My Lords : In obedience to his Majesty's commands, contained in his Royall commission and instructions, authorizing and requiring me to inquire and take the examination of persons and witnesses relating to the disorders and irregularities countenanced and practised by the government of the English Collony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England, in America.

In the month of September, in this present year 1699, I repaired unto the said Collony, and have made inquiry and examined into the disorders, irregularities and maladministrations committed and practised by and within the said government. And in further pursuance of his Majesty's commands, crave leave to observe unto your Lordships wherein (as I apprehend) the government of the said Collony have deviated from, and gone contrary to the rules prescribed by their Charter of incorporation, and the powers and authorities which they have usurped and exercised, beyond the powers therein conferred upon them.

1. They seem wholly to have neglected the Royall intention, and their own professed declaration recited in the Letters Patents of their incorporation, "of Godly edifying themselves and one another in the holy Christian faith and worship, and for the gaining over and conversion of the poor ignorant Indian natives to the sincere profession and observance of the same faith and worship." Upon which grounds, they were granted to have and enjoy their judgments and conscience in matters of religious concernments, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness. In that they have never erected nor encouraged any schools of learning, or had the means of instruction by a learned orthodox ministry. The government being elective, has been kept in the hands of such who have strenuously opposed the same; and the generality of the people are shamefully ignorant, and all manner of licentiousness and profaneness does greatly abound, and is indulged within that government.

. . . . .

15. Their Courts of Justice are held by the Governor and Assistants, who sit as judges therein, more for the constituting of the Court, than for searching out



the right of the causes coming before them, or delivering their opinion in points of law (whereof it's said they know very little). They give no directions to the jury, nor sum up the evidences to them, pointing unto the issue which they are to try. Their proceedings are very immethodical, no ways agreeable to the course and practice of the Courts in England, and many times very arbitrary, and contrary to the laws of the place ; as is affirmed by the attornies at law, that have sometimes practised in their Courts.

16. Their Generall Attorney is a poor illiterate mechanick, very ignorant, on whom they rely for his opinion and knowledge of the law ; and allow of judgments against criminal offenders, drawn in his own name, viz.: I, John Pocock, do indict, &c.

17. The Assistants, or Councillors, who are also Justices of the Peace, and Judges of their Courts, are generally Quakers, and sectaries, elected by the prevailing factions among them ; illiterate, and of little or no capacity, severall of them not able to write their names, or at least so as to be read, unqualified to exercise their respective offices, not having taken the oaths or subscribed the test and Association appointed by Act of Parliament. John Greene, a brutish man, of very corrupt or no principles in religion, and generally known so to be by the people, is notwithstanding from year to year anew elected and continued in the place of Deputy Governor, and second Magistrate in the Collony ; whilst severall gentlemen most sufficient for estate, best capacitated and disposed for his Majesty's service, are neglected and no ways employed in any office or place in the government, but on the contrary maligned for their good affection to his Majesty's service.

18. The aforesaid Deputy Governor Greene, during the time of the late war, granted severall sea commissions under the publick Seal of the Collony unto private

men of war (otherwise pirates), expressly contrary to the will of the Governor, then in the actual exercise of the Government; and notwithstanding his forbidding the same, took no security of the persons to whom the same were granted, nor could he tell by the contents of them, who was to execute the same, being directed in an unusuall manner to the Captain, his assignee or assignees; and otherwise full of tautologies, and nonsense. And all the vessels whereof the Commanders were so commissioned went to Madagascar and the seas of India, and were employed to commit piracy. The said Greene is likewise complained of for exercising divers other exorbitant and arbitrary acts of power, under color of his office.

19. The government is notoriously faulty in countenancing and harboring of pirates, who have openly brought in and disposed of their effects there; whereby the place has been greatly enriched. And not only plain breaches of the Acts of Trade and Navigation have been connived at, but also manifest and known piracies, and all that has been done by them on pretence of seizing and taking up of known pirates, has been so slender, weak and not pursued to effect, as plainly demonstrates it was more in show, than out of any hearty zeal or desire to suppress and bring such notorious criminalls to Justice, and their care has been so little therein, that when they had some of the greatest of those villians in their power, they have suffered them to escape.

## 1702. Governor Joseph Dudley.

Joseph Dudley (1647–1720) was said to be a “philosopher and a scholar, a divine and a lawyer, all com-

bined," but is best known to us as governor of Massachusetts. He held this office from 1702 to 1715. It was in his capacity of captain-general (by virtue of which he was empowered to exercise military authority in Connecticut and Rhode Island in case of necessity) that he made the journey to Rhode Island which is below described. The extract is taken from Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, III. 462, 463.

## GOVERNOR DUDLEY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE.

BOSTON, 17th September, 1702.

*My Lords :*

. . . . .

About twenty days ago, in obedience to her Majesties instructions, I took with me some gentlemen of the Councill here, and a troop of horse to attend me, and came to Rhode Island, and there in presence of Mr. Cranston, Governor, and seven of their Councill, most of them Quakers, and a great assembly of people, I published her Majesty's Letters Patents for the government of the forces and fortifications of that Collony in the time of war, and the commission for the Vice Admiralty, at which the Quakers raged indecently, saying that they were ensnared and injured.

I refused to enter into any conference with them untill I had taken the oaths of allegiance, &c., and had signed the Test, which I told them I would do in the presence of the Councill I brought with me ; but had rather do it before them, and then I should account myself qualified and secure in my proceedings with them, which obtained, so far as that some of them withdrawing, Mr. Cranston administered the oaths, and the next day at a conference with them, I told them I should proceed to review and settle the defects of their militia, and desired the names of their officers ; but

could obtain nothing of them but stubborn refusall, saying they would lose all at once, and not by pieces.

The next day I gave out warrants to the town Major to muster the two Companies in Newport, that I might see them, intending to have given the oaths and spoken kindly to the people; but the Governor and his Council would admit of no such thing, but have called their Generall Assembly, which is now sitting; and, as they say, intend to send home some application to her Majesty.

The day after, I proceeded into the Narraganset country, and came to the town of Rochester, to which I had the honor to give that name sixteen years since, when I was President there, who are now grown to one hundred and twenty men, who with their officers all met me at the sea-side, and attended the publication of the commission, and cheerfully and unanimously, officers and soldiers, took the oaths. I treated them as well as the place and time would allow, and the next day proceeded in my journey. But the Governor and Council of Rhode Island came near to Rochester the next day, sent for the officers, and were greatly displeased with their attendance and submission; and since have used all methods to bring back the people to confusion.

And upon the whole of this article, my Lords, I am humbly of opinion, that I do my duty to acquaint your Lordships, that the government of Rhode Island in the present hands, is a scandal to her Majesty's government. It is a very good settlement, with about two thousand armed men in it. And no man in the government, of any estate or education, though in the Province there be men of very good estates, ability and loyalty; but the Quakers will by no means admit them to any trust, nor would they now accept it, in hopes of a dissolution of that misrule, and that they may be brought under her Majesty's immediate government in

all things which the major part by much of the whole people, would pray for, but dare not, for fear of the oppression and affront of the Quakers party making a noise of their Charter.

My Lords, I am your Lordships' most obedient and most faithfull humble servant,

J. DUDLEY.

### 1702. Cotton Mather.

The reputation of Cotton Mather (1662–1728) as a repository of erudition is well known. He was a Harvard graduate of the class of 1678, studied for the ministry, and at the age of seventeen preached his first sermon. In 1685 he was ordained as his father's colleague in the pastorate of the North Church in Boston, and his connection with this church only ceased with his death. His writings were extremely numerous. The best known is probably that from which this extract is taken,—*Magnalia Christi Americana: Or, the Ecclesiastical History of New-England, from Its First Planting in the Year 1620, unto the year of our Lord, 1698.* London, 1702. Book VII. pp. 20, 21.

I believe there never was held such a variety of *religions* together on so small a spot of ground as have been in that colony. It has been a *colluvies* of *Antinomians*, *Familists*, *Anabaptists*, *Antisabbatarians*, *Arminians*, *Socinians*, *Quakers*, *Ranters*, every thing in

the world but *Roman Catholics*, and *real Christians*, tho' of the *latter*, I hope, there have been more than of the *former* among them ; so that if a man had lost his religion, he might find it at the general muster of opinionists !

I may venture to say, that *Rhode Island* has usually been the *Gerizzim* of *New-England*. The Island is indeed, for the fertility of the soil, the temperatures of the air, the commodiousness of situation, the best garden of all the colonies ; and were it free from serpents, I would have called it the *paradise* of *New-England* : but the number of sensible and ingenious gentlemen, whereof there are some upon the Island, will find it hard enough to rescue it from an extream danger of that character, *Bona Terra, Mala Gens*. The condition of the rising generation upon that Island, is indeed exceedingly lamentable !

The former generation of *Rhode Islanders* is now generally gone off the stage ; and all the messengers which the churches of *Massachuset* colony, whereto any of them did belong, sent with admonitions after them, could reclaim very few of them : the rising generation, confounded by the contradictions in religion among their parents, and under many horrible temptations, and under some unhappy tendencies, to be of no religion at all : and when the ministers of this province have several times, at their own united expences, employ'd certain ministers of the gospel, to make a chargeless tender of preaching the word among them, this charitable offer of ministers has been refused : tho' it seems they are now beginning to embrace it ; the indefatigable, and evangelical, and very laudable industry of Mr. *John Danforth*, the minister of *Dorchester*, has, with the blessing of our Lord thereupon, overcome a number of them, not only to hear the gospel from a worthy young preacher, Mr. *Nathanael Clap*, sent thither, but also to build a meeting-house for that purpose : yea, and the liberal



merchants of *Boston* have in this present year 1695, been exemplary, by their bearing the expences of the *ministers* which we have sent forth to make tenders of the gospel unto other *Paganizing plantations* on the *Main* belonging to that colony ; albeit some of those tenders also have been scandalously rejected by the inhabitants. If I should now launch forth into a narrative of the marvellous *lewd things* which have been said and done by the giddy sectaries of this *Island*, I confess the *matter* would be agreeable enough to the nature and the design of a *church history*, and for a warning unto all to take heed, how they forsake the *word* of God and his ordinances in the societies of the faithful, and follow the conduct of the *new lights*, that are no more than so many *fools-fires* in the issue ; but the *merriment* arising from the ridiculous and extravagant occurrences therein, would not be agreeable to the *gravity* of such a history.

### 1704. Sarah Kemble Knight.

Madam Knight (1666–1727) was the daughter of Thomas Kemble, a merchant of Charlestown and of Boston. She married Richard Knight of Boston.

Madam Knight's later years were passed in Norwich, and she figures with considerable effect in the title-deeds of the real estate transactions of that town, and of New London. "She stood high in the social rank, and was respected both in the church and in mercantile affairs."

In the year 1704 she journeyed alone from Boston to New York, on horseback, apparently for the purpose

of attending to the distribution of an estate, and her journal kept during the pilgrimage is one of the most entertaining bits of description which have come down to us from the eighteenth century.

The quotation is taken from her *Journal*, New York, 1825.

Tuesday, October y<sup>e</sup> third, . . . About Three afternoon went on with my Third Guide, who Rode very hard; and having crossed Providence Ferry, we came to a River w<sup>ch</sup> they Generally Ride thro'. But I dare not venture; so the Post got a Ladd and Cannoo to carry me to tother side, and hee rid thro' and Led my hors. The Cannoo was very small and shallow, so that when we were in she seem'd redy to take in water, which greatly terrified mee, and caused me to be very circumspect, sitting with my hands fast on each side, my eyes stedy, not daring so much as to lodg my tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of my mouth then tother, nor so much as think on Lott's wife, for a wry thought would have oversett our wherey: But was soon put out of this pain, by feeling the Cannoo on shore, w<sup>ch</sup> I as soon almost saluted with my feet; and Rewarding my sculler, again mounted and made the best of our way forwards. The Rode here was very even and y<sup>e</sup> day pleasant, it being now near Sunsett. But the Post told mee we had neer 14 miles to Ride to the next Stage, (where we were to Lodg.) I askt him of the rest of the Rode, foreseeing wee must travail in the night. Hee told mee there was a bad River we were to Ride thro', w<sup>ch</sup> was so very fircce a hors could sometimes hardly stem it; But it was but narrow, and wee should soon be over. I cannot express The concern of mind this relation sett me in; . . . we entred a Thickett of Trees and Shrubbs,



and I perceived by the Hors's going, we were on the descent of a Hill, w<sup>ch</sup> as wee come nearer the bottom, 'twas totaly dark w<sup>th</sup> the Trees that surrounded it. But I knew by the Going of the Hors wee had entred the water, w<sup>ch</sup> my Guide told mee was the hazzardos River, he had told me off; and hee, Riding up close to my Side, Bid me not fear—we should be over Imediatly. . . . So, as the Post bid me, I gave Reins to my Nagg; and sitting as Stedy as Just before in the Cannoo, in a few minutes got safe to the other side, which hee told mee was the Narragansett country.

Here We found great difficulty in Travailing, the way being very narrow, and on each side the Trees and bushes gave us very pleasant welcomes w<sup>th</sup> their Branches and bow's, w<sup>ch</sup> wee could not avoid, it being so exceeding dark. . . . I on a suden was Rous'd . . . by the Post's sounding his horn, which assured mee hee was arrived at the Stage, where we were to Lodg: . . .

Being come to mr. Havens', I was very civilly Received, and courteously entertained, in clean comfortable House; and the Good woman was very active in helping off my Riding clothes, and then askt what I would eat. I told her I had some Chocolett, if shee would prepare it; which with the help of some Milk, and a little clean brass kettle, she soon effected to my satisfaction. I then betook me to my Apartment, w<sup>ch</sup> was a little Room parted from the Kitchen by a single bord partition; where, after I had noted the Occurrences of the past day, I went to bed, which, tho' pretty hard, Yet neet and handsome. But I could get no sleep, because of the Clamor of some of the Town tope-ers in next Room, Who were entred into a strong debate concerning y<sup>e</sup> Signification of the name of their Country, (viz.) *Narraganset*. One said it was named so by y<sup>e</sup> Indians, because there grew a Brier there, of a prodigious Highth and bigness, the like hardly ever known,

called by the Indians Narragansett; And quotes an Indian of so Barberous a name for his Author, that I could not write it. His Antagonist Replied no—It was from a Spring it had its name, w<sup>ch</sup> hee well knew where it was, which was extreem cold in summer, and as Hott as could be imagined in the winter, which was much resorted too by the natives, and by them called Narragansett, (Hott and Cold,) and that was the originall of their places name—with a thousand Impertinances not worth notice, w<sup>ch</sup> He utter'd with such a Roreing voice and Thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the Table, that it peirced my very head. I heartily fretted, and wish't 'um tongue tyed; . . . I set my Candle on a Chest by the bed side, and setting up, fell to my old way of composing my Resentments, in the following manner :

I ask thy Aid, O Potent Rum !  
 To Charm these wrangling Topers Dum.  
 Thou hast their Giddy Brains possest—  
 The man confounded w<sup>th</sup> the Beast—  
 And I, poor I, can get no rest.  
 Intoxicate them with thy fumes :  
 O still their Tongues till morning comes !

Wednesday, Octob<sup>r</sup> 4th. About four in the morning, we set out for Kingston (for so was the Town called) . . . This Rode was poorly furnished w<sup>th</sup> accommodations for Travellers, so that we were forced to ride 22 miles by the post's account, but neerer thirty by mine, before wee could bait so much as our Horses, w<sup>ch</sup> I exceedingly complained of. . . . From hence we proceeded . . . through the Narragansett country pretty Leisurely; and about one afternoon come to Paukataug River.

## 1705. Governor Samuel Cranston.

Samuel Cranston (1659–1727) was that governor of Rhode Island under whom, it is said, “the régime of the Quaker was succeeded by that of the world.” Arnold says of him, in his *History of Rhode Island*, “He held his position [as governor] probably, longer than any other man who had been subjected to the test of an annual popular election. . . . Thirty times successively chosen to the highest office, he preserved his popularity amidst political convulsions that had swept away every other official in the colony.” The following document, Cranston’s “Answer to a Circular letter from the Board of Trade to the Governors of the English Colonies, relative to Negro Slaves,” is taken from Bartlett’s *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, IV. 54, 55.

May it please your Lordships : In obedience to your Lordships’ commands of the 15th of April last, to the trade of Africa.

We, having inspected into the books of Her Majesty’s custom, and informed ourselves from the proper officers thereof, by strict inquiry, can lay before your Lordships no other account of that trade than the following, viz.:

1. That from the 24th of June, 1698, to the 25th of December, 1707, we have not had any negroes imported into this colony from the coast of Africa, neither on the account of the Royal African Company, or by any of the separate traders.

2. That on the 30th of May, 1696, arrived at this port from the coast of Africa, the brigantine Seaflower, Thomas Windsor, master, having on board her forty-

seven negroes, fourteen of which he disposed of in this colony, for betwixt £30 and £35 per head ; the rest he transported by land for Boston, where his owners lived.

3. That on the 10th of August, the 19th and 28th of October, in the year 1700, sailed from this port three vessels, directly for the coast of Africa ; the two former were sloops, the one commanded by Nicho's Hillgroue, the other by Jacob Bill ; the last a ship, commanded by Edwin Carter, who was part owner of the said three vessels, in company with Thomas Bruster, and John Bates, merchants, of Barbadoes, and separate traders from thence to the coast of Africa ; the said three vessels arriving safe to Barbadoes from the coast of Africa, where they made the disposition of their negroes.

4. That we have never had any vessels from the coast of Africa to this colony, nor any trade there, the brigantine above mentioned, excepted.

5. That the whole and only supply of negroes to this colony, is from the island of Barbadoes ; from whence is imported one year with another, betwixt twenty and thirty ; and if those arrive well and sound, the general price is from £30 to £40 per head.

According to your Lordships' desire, we have advised with the chiefest of our planters, and find but small encouragement for that trade to this colony ; since by the best computation we can make, there would not be disposed in this colony above twenty or thirty at the most, annually ; the reasons of which are chiefly to be attributed to the general dislike our planters have for them, by reason of their turbulent and unruly tempers.

And that most of our planters that are able and willing to purchase any of them, are supplied by the offspring of those they have already, which increase daily ; and that the inclination of our people in general, is to employ white servants before negroes.

Thus we have given your Lordships a true and faithful account of what hath occurred, relating to the trade of Africa from this colony; and if, for the future, our trade should be extended to those parts, we shall not fail transmitting accounts thereof to your Lordships' orders, and that at all times be ready to show ourselves,

Your Lordships' obedient servant,

SAMUEL CRANSTON, Governor.

Newport, on Rhode Island, December 5, 1708.

## 1708. Colonel Robert Quarry.

Colonel Robert Quarry (d. about 1712) was governor of South Carolina for a short period in 1684. The encouragement which he gave to piracy induced the proprietor to dismiss him from office in 1685. He was then made secretary of the province, and became governor for the second time about the year 1690. He was afterwards judge of the admiralty in New York and Pennsylvania, and a sort of government spy in this country. The following extract is taken from a "Letter to the Lords of Trade," found in *New York Colonial Documents*, V. 31.

I went hence to Rhode Island, which is a distinct Government, not so populous as Connecticut, but have been more ready in assisting their neighbours against the publick enemy it is scituated betwixt Connecticut Province and that of New England, the scituation of this place is very happy for Trade, having a very good

harbour, with an easy & quick inlet from the sea, their chief Trade is to the West Indies but more especially they have a great Trade to Curacoa and Surinam, the Chief town of Trade is Newport, which is grown in few years to be a great Town, mainly by illegal Trade to those places, nor is it possible to prevent it while the Government is in the Proprietors hands.

### 1708. Governor Samuel Cranston.

For an account of Cranston, see above, p. 27. The following official reply to the Board of Trade in England is derived from Bartlett's *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island*, IV. 56-58.

In answer to the several particular matters set forth and contained in your said letter, in obedience to your Lordship's command, and in compliance to said Assembly's order, I shall here give you the most exact and impartial account as I am capable of relating the said particulars.

1. As to the state and condition of Her Majesty's colony, since the present war. It has pleased the Almighty through his infinite mercy and goodness (upon our endeavors) to protect and preserve us from the assaults of the common enemy, though not without great charge and expense, in keeping and maintaining watches and wards upon the sea coast of this colony, and scouts upon the land side into the country. Our lying so open to the assaults and attempts of the enemy by sea, doth also occasion often and frequent alarms, which doth also create great charge and expense; this



colony are also at considerable charge and trouble in maintaining (during the summer season) a quota of men at Block Island, for the defence and safety thereof.

2. As to the strength and defence of this colony, it chiefly consists (under the Providence of God) in our good look-outs, our expeditions by sea, as aforesaid, and in our militia; the which consists of all males, from sixteen to sixty years of age, who are obliged, at their own charge, to be always provided and fitted with a good firelock musket or fusee, a sword or bayonet, cartouch-box with one pound of good powder, and four pounds of bullets, who are to be ready upon any alarm or other expedition or service, to repair to their ensigns at their respective places of rendezvous, to attend such orders as they shall receive from their superior officers, &c., the which obligations and orders are upon all occasions, very cheerfully and readily obeyed and complied with; . . . In our militia, consists the strength of this colony, it being impossible for us to fortify ourselves so as to keep an enemy from entering into our bay and rivers, or to obstruct their landing, in most places in the colony; though we have a small fort upon an island that covers the harbor of Newport, which is mounted with fifteen pieces of ordnance, from six to nine pound ball, and is a security to our navigation, and the aforesaid town, against any small force.

3. As to the administration of justice in this colony, we have two general courts of trials, which are held on the last Tuesday in March, and the first Tuesday in September, annually; at which courts are tried all actional and criminal causes happening within said colony; where the laws of England are approved of, and pleaded to all intents and purposes, without it be in some particular acts for the prudential affairs of the colony, and not repugnant to the laws of England.

4. As to the number of inhabitants and servants,

with the number of militia, &c., I have herewith enclosed a list of the same in as true and exact a manner as I could procure it from the several towns in the colony to which I refer your Lordships for a full information.

5. As to the trade and commerce of this colony, to and from what places, with the number of ships or vessels that have been built here, and now belonging to the same, and the number of seafaring men, &c., I have herewith enclosed another list, relating to those particulars for your Lordships further information.

6. As to what commodities [are] exported from this colony to England, and how said colony is now supplied with any manufactories that it was wont to be supplied with from England.

This colony never had any immediate or direct trade to or from England, nor any supply directly from thence, but what commodities any of the inhabitants have had to export for England, hath been exported by way of Boston, where their returns are also made, and from whence we have and are chiefly and for the most part, supplied with the manufactory of England; and it is computed, that not less than £20,000 in cash hath been annually, for some years past, remitted from this colony to Boston upon that account.

7. As to the methods taken to prevent illegal trade, we have a collector and controller of Her Majesty's customs settled by the honorable the commissioners in this colony, and a naval officer by the Governor, who take all due methods and care they can, by searching and inspecting the several cargoes imported, and putting the several masters or commanders upon their oaths, &c. We have had no trade to any place but Corrico, that could give us any suspicion of illegal trade; but that trade is at present wholly laid aside by our traders, so that I know of no other place that they have any trade



to or from, that can give us grounds to suspect any fraud.

Your Lordships may assure yourselves, that all due methods will be taken, as there may be occasion, to prevent and suppress any illegal trade, that may hereafter be managed or carried on by any of our traders; and that what orders or directions we shall at any time receive from your Lordships, or the honorable the commissioners, relating to trade, shall and will be punctually and duly observed and complied with in the best manner and method we are capable of.

8. As to the number of vessels built in this colony, we are not capable to inform your Lordships, by reason there hath been no list or memorandum ever kept till since the act for registering hath been in force, from which time you have an exact account in the enclosed list.

9. As to the increase or decay of the trade of this colony, of late years, &c., it doth appear that, about twenty years past, we had not above four or five vessels that did belong to this colony, which hath since gradually increased to the number of twenty-nine, as is set forth in the list.

The reason of which increase (as I apprehend) is chiefly to be attributed to the inclination the youth on Rhode Island have to the sea. The land on said island, being all taken up and improved in small farms, so that the farmers, as their families increase, are compelled to put or place their children to trades or callings; but their inclinations being mostly to navigation, the greater part betake themselves to that employment, so that such as are industrious and thrifty, as they get a small stock before hand, improve it in getting part of a vessel, as many of the tradesmen in the town of Newport also doth, for the benefit of their children that are bred to navigation, in which town consists the chiefest of our navigation; not

above two or three vessels belong to all the colony besides.

One other cause of the increase of our trade is, that it has pleased God to protect them from the hands of the enemy, so that they have not lost above two or three vessels taken this war, they being light and sharp for runners; so that very few of the enemy's privateers, in a gale of wind, will run or outsail one of our vessels.

### 1729. Bishop Berkeley.

George Berkeley (1684–1753), afterward Bishop of Cloyne, was, at the time when he wrote the following letter, Dean of Derry. It was perhaps characteristic of Berkeley's philosophizing temperament that he should look upon the wastes of America as a fitting environment for the development of his educational and religious ideals. He obtained a charter and subscriptions for the foundation of a college, which he hoped eventually to found at Bermuda. In January, 1729, he came to Newport, and remained until the autumn of 1731. He bought a farm of ninety-six acres and built a small house, which he called Whitehall. Here he read and meditated, and, naturally, left his impress upon the minds of the intelligent and educated people of Newport. The letter cited, written to his friend Thomas Prior, founder of the Dublin Society, is taken from Fraser's edition of his *Works*, IV. 160.

Newport, in Rhode Island,  
April 24, 1729.

Dear Tom,

I can by this time say something to you, from my own experience, of this place and people.

The inhabitants are of a mixed kind, consisting of many sorts and subdivisions of sects. Here are four sorts of Anabaptists, besides Presbyterians, Quakers, Independents, and many of no profession at all. Notwithstanding so many differences, here are fewer quarrels about religion than elsewhere, the people living peaceably with their neighbours, of whatever profession. They all agree in one point, that the Church of England is the second best. The climate is like that of Italy, and not at all colder in the winter than I have known it every where north of Rome. The Spring is late ; but, to make amends, they assure me the autumns are the finest and longest in the world, and the summers are much pleasanter than those of Italy by all accounts, forasmuch as the grass continues green, which it doth not there. This island is pleasantly laid out in hills and vales and rising grounds ; hath plenty of excellent springs and fine rivulets, and many delightful landscapes of rocks and promontories and adjacent islands. The provisions are very good ; so are the fruits, which are quite neglected, tho' vines sprout up of themselves to an extraordinary size, and seem as natural to this soil as to any I ever saw. The town of Newport contains about six thousand souls, and is the most thriving flourishing place in all America for its bigness. It is very pretty and pleasantly situated. I was never more agreeably surprised than at the sight of the town and its harbour. I could give you some hints that may be of use to you if you were disposed to take advice ; but of all men in the world, I never found encouragement to give you any.

## 1732. Bishop Berkeley.

The following passage is quoted from a sermon preached by Berkeley before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; *Works*, ed. Fraser, III. 242-244.

Rhode Island, with a portion of the adjacent Continent under the same government, is inhabited by an English Colony, consisting chiefly of sectaries of many different denominations, who seem to have worn off part of that prejudice which they inherited from their ancestors against the national Church of this land; though it must be acknowledged at the same time, that too many of them have worn off a serious sense of all religion. Several indeed of the better sort are accustomed to assemble themselves regularly on the Lord's day for the performance of divine worship; but most of those who are dispersed throughout this colony seem to rival some well-bred people of other countries in a thorough indifference for all that is sacred, being equally careless of outward worship, and of inward principles, whether of faith or practice. Of the bulk of them it may certainly be said that they live without the sacraments, not being so much as baptized: and as for their morals, I apprehend there is nothing to be found in them that should tempt others to make an experiment of their principles, either in religion or government. But it must be owned, the general behaviour of the inhabitants in those towns where churches and meetings have been long settled and regularly attended seems so much better as sufficiently to show the difference which a solemn regular worship of God

makes between persons of the same blood, temper, and natural faculties.

The native Indians, who are said to have been formerly many thousands, within the compass of this colony, do not at present amount to one thousand, including every age and sex. And these are either all servants and laborers for the English, who have contributed more to destroy their bodies by the use of strong liquors than by any means to improve their minds or save their souls. This slow poison, jointly operating with the small-pox, and their wars (but much more destructive than both), have consumed the Indians, not only in our Colonies, but also far and wide upon our confines. And, having made havoc of them, is now doing the same thing by those who taught them that odious vice.

The negroes in the government of Rhode Island are about half as many more than the Indians; and both together scarce amount to a seventh part of the whole Colony. The religion of these people, as is natural to suppose, takes after that of their masters. Some few are baptized; several frequent the different assemblies: and far the greater part none at all. An ancient antipathy to the Indians—whom, it seems, our first planters (therein as in certain other particulars affecting to imitate Jews rather than Christians) imagined they had a right to treat on the foot of Canaanites or Amalekites—together with an irrational contempt of the blacks, as creatures of another species, who had no right to be instructed or admitted to the sacraments—have proved a main obstacle to the conversion of these poor people.

To this may be added, an erroneous notion that the being baptized is inconsistent with a state of slavery. To undeceive them in this particular, which had too much weight, it seemed a proper step, if the opinion of

his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor-General could be procured. This opinion they charitably sent over, signed with their own hands ; which was accordingly printed in Rhode Island, and dispersed throughout the Plantations. I heartily wish it may produce the intended effect.

### 1739. Rev. John Callender.

The Rev. John Callender (1706–1740) became, in 1728, the pastor of the Baptist Church in Swansea, and, in 1731, was called to the Baptist Church in Newport, where he remained until his death. In 1739, he published *An Historical Discourse on the Civil and Religious Affairs of the Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America, From the First Settlement, 1638, to the End of the First Century*. This is usually known as his “Centennial Discourse.” The following extract is from p. 19 of the *Discourse*.

In 1730 the Inhabitants of the *whole Island* were *Five Thousand four Hundred and Fifty Eight*, and of this Town [Newport] *Four Thousand six Hundred and Forty*, who are no doubt by this Time increased to *Five Thousand Souls*.

The Trade and Business of the Town at the first, was but very little, and inconsiderable, consisting only of a little *Corn* and *Pork* and *Tobacco*, sent to *Boston*, for a few *European* and other Goods, they could not



subsist without, and all at the Mercy of the Traders there too.\*

At present there are *above one Hundred Sail* of Vessels belonging to this *Town*, besides what belong to the *rest of the Colony*. GOD grant, that as we increase in Numbers and Riches, we may not increase in Sin and Wickedness; but that we may rather be lead, by the divine Goodness, to reform whatever may have been amiss or wanting in us.

there are at this Time, *seven worshipping Assemblies*, Churches of Societies, in this *Town*, besides a large one of the People called *Quakers*, at *Portsmouth*, the other Part of the Island. . . .

There are in the *nine Towns on the main Land* eight Churches of the People called *Baptists*, one in every Town, except *Greenwich*, where there is however a Meeting House in which there is a Meeting once a Month.

Of the People called *Quakers* there are *seven Meeting Houses* on the main Land, and one at *James-Town* on *Conanicut Island*; and a constant Meeting at *Westerly*, tho' no Meeting House yet erected.

There are *four episcopal Churches on the Main*, one at *Providence*, . . . and one at *North-Kingston*, . . . besides one at *Westerly*, and one on the Edge of *Warwick*, adjoining to *East-Greenwich*, which are occasionally supply'd by the Missionaries at other Towns.

There are *three Presbyterian or Congregational Churches* at *Providence*, *South-Kingston* & *Westerly*.

\*Perhaps it may be agreeable to some Persons, to observe, that about 1660, and many Years after, *Provision Pay* was 100 *per Cent.* beneath *Sterling Money*. In 1687 the Prices of Goods set to pay Taxes in, were, Wool 8d. per Pound, Butter 4d. Indian Corn 1s. 6d. per Bushel. If the Tax was paid in Money, then there was to be an Allowance or Abatement of one sixth Part, and that perhaps will nearly give the true current Price, of those kinds of Provisions, at that Time.

## 1739. Modern History.

The book from which this quotation is taken is the twenty-sixth volume of a series entitled *Modern History : or the Present State of All Nations*. It was published at Dublin, in 1739, by Herman Moll, a noted English geographer of the eighteenth century. The extract is found on p. 307.

As to the state of religion in *Rhode-Island* colony, a gentleman of considerable interest there gives me this account of it. He says, they are a very free people in that respect. They consist of episcopalians, presbyterians, anabaptists and quakers, but the quakers are now the most considerable, their present governor, *John Wanton*, esq ; being a quaker, as are also several of the council and house of representatives ; and as they are principled for a free ministry of the gospel, so consequently there is no forced maintenance in the colony for the ministry of any persuasion, but every different society that are for maintaining a preacher do it voluntarily by contribution or subscription. . . .

There is a stage wagon which goes from *Boston* to *Newport* in *Rhode-Island*, being seventy miles. Gentlemen also have coaches and chaises, but they travel most commonly on horseback. And there are inns on the roads as well provided for the entertainment of travellers as those of *Old-England*.



## 1741. Captain William Chandler.

Captain William Chandler (d. 1754) was an inhabitant of Woodstock, of Killingly, and of Thompson, Connecticut, a surveyor, and a justice of the peace. He was the father of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, the well-known Episcopalian and Tory controversialist, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, bishop-designate of Nova Scotia. Captain Chandler's effusion is here copied from a rare broadside in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society, entitled "A Journal of a Survey of Narragansett Bay, made in May and June, 1741, by Order of Royal Commissioners, by One of the Surveyors." It has been reprinted in the *Narragansett Historical Register*, IV. 1.

*These Lines below, describe a just Survey  
Of all the Coasts, along the 'Gansett Bay ;  
Therefore attend, and quickly you shall know  
Where it begins, and how far it doth go.  
From Pawcatuck, we steer'd our Course away,  
And to Watch Hill we went without delay ;  
Which gave a Prospect of the Neighboring Shore  
And distant Isles, where foaming billows roar.  
Here Fisher's Isle appears, and looks just by  
And Montauk Point we plainly could descry ;  
Block Island also near us did appear,  
We took our Course, and how each Place did bear.  
From hence our Course did lead us on the Sands.  
The utmost Bounds the Billows here Commands,  
Whose raging Waves caress the Beach and Shore  
With endless Motion and a murmuring Roar :*

Then passing o'er the Breaches in our way  
Made by the Surges of the raging Sea.  
Where in the Land Calm Ponds we here espy'd  
Which rise and fall exactly with the Tide.  
Within these Ponds are Fish of various Kind,  
Which much delight and please both Taste and Mind.  
And many Fowls the Industrious Archer gains,  
Which amply doth Reward his Time and Pains,  
(Here in a Pond, our Caution to oppose  
A Horse did launch and wet his Owners Cloaths  
The frightened jade soon tacked himself about  
Which made us laugh as soon as he came out.)  
Then round *Point Judith* which was in our way  
The Courses there, and Length we did Survey,  
Then *Boston Neck* along that pleasant Shore  
We next survey'd, and found how each part bore ;  
(*Connanicutt* we also viewed full well,  
And other Parts too tedious here to tell.)  
Went on this shore, round points of Lands and Coves.  
Thro' various Fields and most delightful Groves,  
From hence along unto *North Kingston* shore  
Crossing the Meads, which Verdant Greens now wore.  
And then for *Greenwich* next, we shap'd our way,  
(Passing more Islands which lie in the Bay,  
As *Hope* and *Prudence* that most pleasant Isle  
And *Patience* also, a most fruitful Soil.)  
Crossing a Harbour, we came to the Town  
Which seems to be a Place of great Renown,  
For Liberty of Conscience they take  
Here's Church and Baptist, also those that Quake.  
From hence we went along with our Survey  
By various Turns and came to *Warwick* Bay  
And in that Town did of their Dainties eat  
And in soft slumbers pass'd the Night with Sleep.  
Here neighbouring Orchards in their verdant Blooms.  
The gentle Air sweetens with their Perfumes ;

Which pleasing Prospect did attract our sight  
And charm'd our Sense of smelling with Delight.  
From hence we went on our Survey again  
By fertile Meads which join the wat'ry Main.  
Turning more Points, and passing on our way  
Came to a Place on which a Dead Man lay,  
A dreadful sight it was, our Blood run chill  
It damp't our joys and made our Spirits thrill,  
Ah! what is Man? when he by Nature's Laws  
Is fallen a Prey to Death's relentless Paws  
But vanity? His mortal Part I mean  
But stop my Muse and quit this mournful Theme.  
From hence by Fields, and now and then a Ridge  
We came at length unto *Pawtuxett* Bridge,  
The Southern Bounds which Providence does claim  
And does divide fine *Warwick* from the same.  
Passing along still by the flowing Tide  
The famous town of *Providence* we spy'd,  
To which we came, viewing how Nature made  
(With Art allied) this for a Place of Trade.  
This Pleasant Town does border on the Flood  
Here's neighbouring Orchards, & more back the Wood,  
Here's full supply to cheer our hungry Souls  
*Sr. Richard* (strong) as well as Wine in Bowls.  
Here Men may soon any Religion find  
Which quickly brought brave Holland to my Mind.  
For here like them, one with the greatest ease  
May suit himself, or quit all if He please.  
Our haste in Business call'd us from this Town  
By *Seaconk* shore, away to *Barrington*  
Passing that Ferry, something did accrue  
Which the next Lines, shall give unto your view,  
Here jumping out our Horses from the Boat  
One blundering sprang which rais'd up each Man's note  
And tumbling o'er the Horse fell on his Back  
Into the Deep and wet his Master's Pack.

For Bristol Town we shap'd our Course away  
And *Poppassquash* we quickly did survey,  
But on this shore we turn'd a while to rove,  
And went to *Vial's* and walk'd thro' his Grove.  
This charming Place was neat and clean, a Breese  
Attend the shade made by black cherry Trees,  
On either side a Row of large extent  
And nicely shading every step We went :  
Methinks young Lovers here with open Arms  
Need no young Cupids to inspire their Charms,  
For what can raise the Nymphs or Swains to love  
In sweet Caresses, sooner than this Grove.  
From hence (with Air) we pass thro' *Bristol* streets  
Where Generous Hearts did give their liberal Treats,  
Yet soon we found one of another Mould  
For here a Crabbed jade did at us Scold,  
Her grevel'd Notes yet made some of us smile  
Whose impeous Talk was near to *Prattle Isle*,  
Which Place we named to memorise this Scold  
And for her sake this story I have told.  
Now next we took our Course to *Castle Isle*  
And pass'd away soon from this pleasant Soil  
Finding exactly how *Hog-Island* bore  
With Course and Distance to *Aquetnett* shore.  
Mount Hope from hence we plainly now espy'd  
Which was hard by, or near the flowing Tide,  
To which we came taking the Courses here  
To neighbouring shores, and Islands that are near.  
Turning aside we saw the Royal Spring  
Which once belong'd unto an Indian King,  
To chear our Hearts we drank the cooling stream  
In memory of *Philip* and his Queen.  
Next we ascended *Philip's* Royal Seat  
Where he was slain, and all his Armies beat  
We saw the Place where quartered he did hang,  
Where joyful notes of Praise those Victors sang.

Upon this Mount the wandering Eye may gaze  
On distant Floods, as well as neighbouring Bays  
Where with one Glance appears Ten Thousand charms  
With fruitful Islands, and most fertile Farms.  
Now from this Mount we went (like Men well skill'd)  
By Flocks and Herds which verdant Pastures fill'd,  
Unto *Assont* took the Distance here  
And turn'd about new Courses now to steer.  
From hence we went by various Towns in haste,  
And by *Rhode-Island* shore we also past  
Where every Turn and Cove We noted down  
Shaping our Courses unto *Seconet* Town,  
When we came near that pleasant place and soil  
I heard a story which will make you smile.  
A worthy Friend who lately had great Losses  
Amongst his stock, but chiefly in his Horses,  
By evil Men, who haunts his Fields by night  
When he's from home and kills them out of spight,  
This Friend relates (whose Daughter was before me)  
With chearful Air the following Famous Story :  
"One Evening clear (said he) she took up Arms  
"Laying aside a while her Virgin Charms.  
"And walk'd abroad some of my Fields to view,  
"The Flocks and Herds, to see what would ensue  
"Then instantly with Courage being inspir'd  
"She at an Armed Rogue her Pistol fir'd  
"Crying aloud you Wretch begone from hence,  
"Or stand and fight me in your own Defence.  
"But guilty Creature, he took to his Heels  
"And left this Maiden in the Conquer'd Fields  
"Who joy'd awhile for this brave Action done,  
"And then return'd unto her Peaceful Home."  
From hence we passed along *Seconet* Shore,  
Unto its Point where Dreadful Billows roar,  
Whose rolling Waves come tumbling from the main  
And kiss the Shore and then retire again.

Here may the Eye survey the tossing Sea  
And sport the sight with Ships that sailing be  
Upon this Coast, which come from distant Lands ;  
And then may turn and view the Beach and Sands,  
True Gratitude forbids I should be mute,  
Where Generous Souls, our Spirits do Recruit.  
Now sure, this Town deserves our best of Praise,  
Since none more strived our Spirits soon to raise.  
But stop my Muse, let's haste on our Survey  
And stretch our coast along the Eastward Bay.  
So then from thence we measur'd by the Sands  
An Eastward Course along those Pleasant Lands,  
And came to *Dartmouth* a most liberal Town  
Whose liquid Treats their generous Actions crown,  
Here is the place where we did end our Works  
Here we left off, (and did it with a jirk)  
And then retir'd our Field Book for to scan,  
And of this large Survey to make a Plan.

W. C.

## 1741. Rev. John Checkley.

The Rev. John Checkley (1680–1754), born in Boston, and celebrated for his violent controversies with the Congregational clergy of that town and his persecution, or at least prosecution, on that account, was from 1739 rector of King's Church, in Providence, now St. John's. He had travelled extensively in Europe, and was fond of collecting paintings, rare books and manuscripts. He is spoken of by writers in the early part of the present century as one of the wits of his time, and his bon-mots and witticisms were cur-



rent for a whole generation after his death. He was universally beloved by his parishioners and by his fellow-townsmen. The extract given here is taken from Checkley's "Notitia Parochialis," appended to the second volume of Dr. E. F. Slafter's life of him, Vol. XXIV. of the *Prince Society Publications*, pp. 197, 198.

### NOTITIA PAROCHIALIS.

1. Number of Inhabitants,

In the towns out of which my Parishioners come (I mean those who frequent my church) about fourteen thousand people.

2. No. of the Baptized.

Impossible to tell. But I conjecture that in Providence not One in Ten, and in three Towns above Providence not one in thirty.

3. No. of adult persons baptized this half year.

One.

4. No. of actual Communicants of the Ch. of England.

Thirty-seven.

5. No. of those who profess themselves of the Ch. of England.

About two hundred.

6. No. of Dissenters of all sorts, particularly papists.

About eight Thousand, & much to be feared one half of them Infidels. Some few papists, who I believe harbour many others in Disguize.

7. No. of Heathens & Infidels.

About six Thousand, and a round number of them Atheists, as far as wretched man can be such.

8. No. of Converts from a prophane, disorderly and unchristian Course of Life, to a Life of Christian purity, meekness and Charity.

Two.

## 1720. Rev. Daniel Neal.

Neal (1678–1743) is best known as the historian of the Puritans. The *History of New England*—his first work—was published in London, in 1720, and had a warmly favorable reception in America. Harvard conferred the honorary degree of M. A. upon the author. It would seem to be a conscientious and painstaking work. The extract given is taken from the second edition, London, 1747, II. 233.

*Providence and Warwick*, two large Towns in the *Narrhaganset* County upon the Continent, are under this Government [Rhode Island] and have the least Appearance of Order of any Towns in *New-England*. The Inhabitants of these Places are likewise the Descendants of those Sectaries who were banished the *Massachusetts* Jurisdiction between the year 1630 and 1640, . . . , but they now live in great Amity with their Neighbours, and though every Man does what he thinks right in his own Eyes, it is rare that any notorious Crimes are committed by them, which may be attributed in some Measure to their great Veneration for the Holy Scriptures, which they read from the least to the greatest, though they have neither Ministers nor Magistrates to recommend it to them. They have an Aversion to all Sorts of Taxes, as the Inventions of Men to support *Hirelings*, as they call all such Magistrates and Ministers as won't serve them for nothing. They are very hospitable to Strangers; a Traveller passing through these Towns may call at any House with the same Liberty as if he were in an Inn, and be kindly entertained with the best they have for nothing.



The raising of Cattle, and making Butter and Cheese is their chief Employ, by which they have very much enriched themselves. The Society for propagating the Gospel after the Manner of the Church of *England* have lately planted a Missionary in these Parts (*viz.*) the Reverend Mr. *Guy*, to whom they allow 70 *l. per Annum*. . . .

the Inhabitants [of Newport] begin now to be more civilized, since there have been two Churches in the Island, one according to the *New-English* Model, the other according to the Church of *England*; of which latter the Rev. Mr. *Honeyman* is the present Incumbent, to whom the Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign Parts allow 55 *l. per Annum*.

## 1752. Rev. Dr. James MacSparran.

Dr. MacSparran (d. 1757) was an out-spoken, but extremely diverting missionary of the Church of *England*, who officiated as clergyman at St. Paul's Church, Narragansett, from 1721 until his death.

At one time his parish contained Bristol, Freetown, Swansey, and Little Compton. He was much interested in the establishment of St. John's (then King's) Church, in Providence. His zeal for his mission work, his laudable endeavors to improve his own worldly condition, and his keen appreciation of his own merits and his neighbors' deficiencies, form a most attractive combination. This quotation is from his *America Dissected* (written in 1752, published in 1753), pp. 27 *et seq.*, reprinted in Updike's *Narragansett Church*. His letter-book, 1743-1751, has just been printed.

The next Region that rises to View is the little Colony of *Rhode-Island*, &c. where Providence has fixed me, and where I have resided in Quality of Missionary thirty-one Years last *April*. . . . This little District . . . contains about 1,024,000 Acres, and is peopled with about 30,000 Inhabitants, young and old, white and black. . . . In Connecticut I observed to you that Independency was the Religion of the State ; but in *Rhode-Island* no Religion is established. There a Man may, with Impunity, be of any Society, or of none at all ; but the Quakers are, for the most part, the People in Power. . . . no sooner did their Preachers appear in *Rhode-Island*, but they found many of the Posterity of the first Planters too well prepared for the Reception of pestilent Heresy. The twenty-four Years that had run out from their first *Removal* from *England*, and the seventeen that had elapsed from their second Settlement at *Rhode-Island*, had carried off the Stage of Life most of those who received the first Rudiments of Religion in the Mother Country. Their Descendants and Successors, without Schools, without a regular Clergy, became necessarily rude and illiterate ; and, as Quakerism prevailed, Learning was decried, Ignorance and Heresy so increased, that neither *Epiphanius's*, nor *Sir Richard Blackmore's* Catalogues, contain more heterodox and different Opinions in Religion than were to be found in this little Corner. . . . In 1700, after Quakerism and other Heresies had, in their Turns, ruled over and tinged all the Inhabitants for the Space of forty-six Years, the Church of *England*, that had been lost here through the Neglect of the Crown, entered as it were, unobserved and unseen, and yet not without some Success. A little Church was built in *Newport*, the Metropolis of the Colony, in 1702, and that in which I officiate in *Narragansett*, in 1707.

There have been two Incumbents before me ; but

neither of them had resolution enough to grapple with the Difficulties of this Mission, above a Year a-piece. I entered upon this Mission in 1721 ; and found the people, not a *Tabula rasa*, or clean Sheet of Paper, upon which I might make any Impressions I pleased ; but a Field full of Briars and Thorns, and noxious weeds, that were all to be eradicated, before I could implant in them the Simplicity of Truth. However, by God's Blessing, I have brought over to the Church some Hundreds, and, among the Hundreds I have baptized, there are at least 150 who received the Sacrament at my Hands, from twenty years old, to seventy or eighty. *Ex Pede Herculem*. By this, you may guess in how uncultivated a Country my Lot fell. By my Excursions, and Out-Labours, a Church is built 25 Miles to the Westward of me, but not now under my Care ; another 16 Miles to the Northward of me, where I officiate once a Month ; and, at a Place six Miles farther off, on the Saturday before that monthly Sunday. I gathered a Congregation at a Place called *New-Bristol*, where now officiates a Missionary from the Society ; and I was the first Episcopal Minister that ever preached at *Providence*, where, for a long Time, I used to go four times a Year ; but that Church has now a fixed Missionary of its own. I took Notice before of my Labours at *New-London* in *Connecticut*, and would to God I could boast of more Success ! but Toil and Travel has put me beyond my Best ; and, if I am not rewarded with a little Rest in *Europe*, where my Desires are, I have strong Hopes of infinitely more desirable Rest from my Labours, in those celestial Mansions prepared by my dear Redeemer. Besides the Members of our Church, who, I may boast, are the best of the People, being Converts, not from Convenience or civil Encouragement, but Conscience and Conviction ; there are Quakers, Anabaptists of four

sorts, Independents, with a still larger Number than all those, of the Descendants of *European* Parents, devoid of all Religion, and who attend no Kind of Public Worship. In all the other Colonies, the Law lays an Obligation to go to some Sort of Worship on Sunday; but here, Liberty of Conscience is carried to an irreligious Extreme. The Produce of this Colony is principally Butter and Cheese, fat Cattle, Wool, and fine Horses, that are exported to all Parts of the *English America*. They are remarkable for Fleetness and swift Pacing; and I have seen some of them pace a Mile in little more than *two* Minutes, a good deal less than *three*.

There are above 300 Vessels, such as Sloops, Schooners, Snows, Brigantines, and Ships, from 60 Tons and upwards, that belong to this Colony; but, as they are rather Carriers for other Colonies, than furnished here with their Cargoes, you will go near to conclude that we are lazy and greedy of Gain, since, instead of cultivating the Lands, we improve too many Hands in Trade. This indeed is the Case. There are here, which is no good Symptom, a vast many Law-Suits; more in one Year than the County of *Derry* has in twenty; and *Billy M'Evers* has been so long your Father's, and your Honour's Constable, that he would make a very good Figure on the Bench of our Courts of Assize and General Goal Delivery. The Novanglians in general, the *Rhode-Islanders* in particular, are perhaps the only People on Earth who have hit on the Art of enriching themselves by running in Debt. This will remain no longer a Mystery, than I have related to your Honour, that we have no Money among us, but a depreciating Paper Currency; and this, in the Current of 30 Years, has dwindled down from 6s. 8d. to about 4l. per Ounce. He who disposes of his Goods on long Credit, and another who lends his Money at

10 l. 12½, or even 15 l. per Cent. the first loses his Profits, and the last some of his Principal, besides all the Interest. Indeed, a new Act of the *British* Parliament, ill-penned, passed last Winter, to restrain us : But such Things are only *Bruta Fulmina* ; and we shall go on, I doubt, in our old Way of Paper Emissions, unless the Lord, in Mercy to us, should dispose the sovereign Power to vacate our Patent, and prevent our Destruction by taking us out of our own Hands. I mentioned *Wool* as one of the Productions of this Colony ; but, altho' it is pretty plenty where I live, yet if you throw the *English America* into one Point of View, there is not half enough to make Stockings for the Inhabitants. We are a vast Advantage to *England*, in the Consumption of her Manufactures ; for which we make Returns, in New Ships, Whale Oil, and Bone, (which grows in the Whale's Mouth) and dry Fish, to the Ports of *Portugal*, *Spain*, and *Italy*, which are paid for by Draughts on *London* and *Bristol* Merchants. I wish *Ireland* were at Liberty to ship us their Woollens, which we shall always want, instead of her Linens, which will soon cease to be in demand here. Before I leave this Colony, give me Leave to observe to your Honour, that the Lord Marquis of *Hamilton*, Predecessor to the late Dukes of that Title, bought of the aforesaid Council of *Plymouth* 60 Miles square of Land, which comprehends most of this Colony, and Part of *Connecticut*, with 10,000 Acres at *Sagadahock* ; and only Length of Time, Neglect, and some Misfortunes that befel that Family, have deprived them of the Benefit of that great Estate. The last Duke put a Copy of his Patent into my Hands, when I was in *England*, in 1737 ; and from that, and what he told me, it appeared to my Understanding, that his Title was good, and might, were the Times favourable to that Family, be recovered again. At an easy Quit-



Rent of 5s. Sterling per 100 Acres, it would amount to more than 5760*l. per Annum*, and might be improved to a much greater Sum. . . .

I've said nothing of the climate. You are to know then, that, . . . In general, the Air is infinitely more clear and serene than in *England* or *Ireland*; and our Nearness to the Sun occasions more frequent and loud Claps of Thunder, and sharper Lightning, than you have. It is no unusual Thing for Houses, and Stacks of Hay, and Grain, to be burnt; and Men and Cattle are often killed by the sharp Lightning. In *New-England*, the Transitions from Heat to Cold are short and sudden, and the Extreme of both very sensible: We are sometimes frying, and at others freezing; and as Men often die at their Labour in the Field by *Heat*, so some in Winter are froze to Death with the Cold. Last Winter, in *February*, which begins the Spring with you, I rode 30 Miles upon one continued Glaze of Ice upon the Land, to assist a neighbouring Clergyman, who was sick. With a Horse well caulk'd and frosted, 'tis fine Travelling for one that can sometimes 'light and run, to bring the Blood into his Feet, and increase the checked Circulation. As from my Lands I can see the *Atlantic* Ocean, I have seen it froze as far as the human Eye could reach; and 'tis common, in a beautiful Lake of salt Water that fronts my Farm, to have the Ice three Feet thick every Winter. . . .

As the Shadow lengthens as the Sun grows low, so, as the Years increase, my Longings after *Europe* increase also. My Labours and Toils are inexpressible, and Age makes them still more intolerable.

Vagrant, illiterate Preachers swarm where I am; and the native *Novanglian* Clergy of our Church, against the Opinion of the *European* Missionaries, have introduced a Custom of young Scholars going about and reading Prayers, &c. where there are Vacancies, on

purpose that they may step into them when they can get Orders ; yea, they have so represented the Necessity and Advantage of the Thing, that the very Society connive at, if not encourage it. This occasioned my preaching, and afterwards printing, the inclosed Discourse, on which I shall be glad to have your Sentiments.

### 1754. Rev. Jacob Bailey.

Jacob Bailey (1731–1808) was a clergyman of the Church of England, who was born in Massachusetts, and graduated at Harvard. He visited England, and was ordained in that country, and later became a missionary in Pownalborough, now Wiscasset, Maine. During the Revolutionary war he was a loyalist, and, in 1779, left the United States for Nova Scotia, where he became rector of St. Luke's Church in Annapolis.

The following extract is taken from his journal, published in *The Frontier Missionary, A Memoir of the life of the Rev. Jacob Bailey*, by W. S. Bartlett, New York, 1853, pp. 16 *et seq.*

Providence is a most beautiful place, lying on both sides of a fine river, in the north-westerly part of Rhode Island government. The north-east side is built with two streets of painted houses, above which lies a most delightful hill, gradually ascending to a great distance, all cut into gardens, orchards, pleasant fields, and beautiful enclosures, which strike the eye with agreeable surprise. Here is a fine harbor for shipping, and



a well-built bridge across the river. The town on the south-west side, is less elegant than on the north-east, but contains two or three streets of well-built houses. Providence is a very growing and flourishing place, and the finest in New England. Here is one meeting-house, one church, one Quaker and one New-Light house for divine worship. The inhabitants of the place, in general, are very immoral, licentious and profane, and exceeding famous for contempt of the Sabbath. Gaming, gunning, horse-racing and the like, are as common on that day as on any other. Persons of all professions countenance such practices. From Providence we rode over a fine plain to Patuxet.

#### Patuxet

Is a pretty compact place, built upon a small river, over which is a very good bridge. From Patuxet we rode through a long desert country, in which we saw but a very few people, and they almost as rough as the trees.

. . . . .

#### Warwick.

A poor, but old-settled town, something populous, on the borders of Greenwich; the inhabitants very profane and unpolite.

### 1759. Rev. Andrew Burnaby.

Burnaby (1734 c.-1812) was an English clergyman, who made extended journeys in America, chiefly in the Middle States, in 1759 and 1760.

His observations show good judgment and are interesting. He is careful to avoid any allusion to the political events of the time. The extract given is taken from his *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North America*, p. 67 *et seq.* London, 1775.

### Newport. Rhode Island.

This town is situated upon a small island, about twelve miles in length, and five or six in breadth, called Rhode Island, from whence the province takes its name. It is the capital city, and contains about 800, or 1000 houses, chiefly built of wood ; and 6 or 7000 inhabitants. There are few buildings in it worthy of notice. The court-house is indeed handsome, and of brick ; and there is a public library, built in the form of a Grecian temple, by no means inelegant. It is of the Doric order, and has a portico in front with four pillars, supporting a pediment ; but the whole is spoilt by two small wings, which are annexed to it. . . . The places of public worship, except the Jews synagogue, are all of wood ; and not one of them is worth looking at. They consist chiefly of a church, two presbyterian meeting-houses, one quakers ditto, three anabaptists ditto, one Moravian ditto, and the synagogue above-mentioned. This building was designed, as indeed were several of the others, by a Mr. Harrison, an ingenious English gentleman who lives here. It will be extremely elegant within when completed : but the outside is totally spoilt by a school, which the Jews insisted on having annexed to it for the education of their children. Upon a small island, before the town, is part of a fine fortification, designed to consist of a pentagon-fort, and an upper and lower battery. Only two of the curtains, and a ravelin, are yet finished ; and it is doubted whether the whole ever will be.

There are now mounted upon it twenty-six cannon ; but the works, when complete, will require above 150. At the entrance of the harbour there is likewise an exceeding good light-house. These are the chief public buildings.

About three miles from town is an indifferent wooden house, built by dean Berkeley, when he was in these parts : the situation is low, but commands a fine view of the ocean, and of some wild rugged rocks that are on the left hand of it. . . . The province of Rhode Island is situated . . . in the most healthy climate of North-America. The winters are severe, though not equally so with those of the other provinces ; but the summers are delightful, especially in the island ; the violent and excessive heats which America is in general subject to, being allayed by the cool and temperate breezes that come from the sea. The soil is upon the whole tolerably good, though rather too stony ; its natural produce is maize or Indian corn, with a variety of shrubs and trees. It produces in particular the button-tree ; the spruce-pine, of the young twigs of which is made excellent beer ; and the pseudo-acacia, or locust-tree ; but none of those fine flowering trees, which are such an ornament to the woods in Carolina and Virginia. It enjoys many advantages, has several large rivers, and one of the finest harbours in the world. Fish are in the greatest plenty and perfection, particularly the tataag or black-fish, lobsters, and sea-bass. In its cultivated state, it produces very little, except sheep and horned cattle ; the whole province being laid out into pasture or grazing ground. The horses are bony and strong, and the oxen much the largest in America ; several of them weighing from 16 to 1800 weight. . . . The government of this province is entirely democratical ; every officer, except the collector of the customs, being appointed, I believe, either im-

mediately by the people, or by the general assembly. . . . There is no established form of religion here ; but church of England men, independents, quakers, anabaptists, Moravians, Jews, and all other sects whatever, have liberty to exercise their several professions. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sends only four missionaries.

Arts and sciences are almost unknown, except to some few individuals ; and there are no public seminaries of learning ; nor do the Rhode Islanders in general seem to regret the want of them. . . .

The character of the Rhode-Islanders is by no means engaging, or amiable ; a circumstance principally owing to their form of government. Their men in power, from the highest to the lowest, are dependent upon the people, and frequently act without that strict regard to probity and honour, which ever ought invariably to influence and direct mankind. The private people are cunning, deceitful, and selfish ; they live almost entirely by unfair and illicit trading. Their magistrates are partial and corrupt ; and it is folly to expect justice in their courts of judicature ; for he, who has the greatest influence, is generally found to have the fairest cause. . . . In short, to give an idea of the wretched state of this colony, it has happened more than once, that a person has had sufficient influence to procure a fresh emission of paper-money, solely to defraud his creditors ; . . . It is needless, after this, to observe that it is in a very declining state ; for it is impossible that it should prosper under such abuses. Its West Indian trade has diminished ; . . . it has lost during the war, by the enemy, above 150 vessels ; . . . it has been loaded with taxes, and many of the people have been oppressed by the mode of collecting them : . . . After having said so much to the disadvantage of this

colony, I should be guilty of injustice and ingratitude, were I not to declare that there are many worthy gentlemen in it, who see the misfortunes of their country and lament them ; . . . who are courteous and polite ; kind and hospitable to strangers ; and capable of great acts of generosity and goodness, as I myself experienced during a very severe fit of illness which I lay under at this place.

### 1765. Colonel Robert Rogers.

Robert Rogers (1727–1800) was celebrated as the commander of the “Rough Riders” of the French and Indian wars of 1755–1760. His troop was known as Rogers’ Rangers, and the name of Rogers’ Rock, on Lake George, commemorates his feat of sliding down the precipice to escape from the Indians. At one time he was royal governor of Mackinaw, Michigan. In the Revolutionary war he held the rank of colonel in the British army, and commanded the “Queen’s Rangers.” He was the author of several books.

This quotation is taken from his *Concise Account of North America*, 1765, pp. 55–59.

This colony comprehends what were originally the colonies or plantations of Rhode Island and Providence, being incorporated into one, by a new charter, about the same time as the colony of Connecticut ; and, like that, they still retain the rights and privileges that were at first granted them in their separate state, keeping up likewise two seats of government, viz. Newport and

Providence, at which places their general court is held alternately.

This colony has but a small territory, lying nearly in the figure of an heart, and is bounded north and east by the Massachuset's Bay, southerly by the ocean, and westerly by Connecticut.

The principal towns in it are those already mentioned of Newport, situated on the Island called Rhode Island, pleasantly enough, and has a safe and good harbour for ordinary shipping; and Providence, situated not less pleasantly upon Providence River, is a very thriving town, and has a considerable trade.

The number of inhabitants in this colony is computed to be about 70,000.

The soil is generally low, and inclined to rocks and stones; however, when properly improved, produces Indian corn, rye, oats, pease, hemp, flax, and some wheat, and most kinds of fruit common to the climate, in great perfection, especially on Rhode Island itself, which, for beauty and fertility, is the garden of the colony, and is exceeded perhaps by no spot in New England. They raise cattle, sheep, and horses in abundance, and the latter the best on the continent. They likewise make considerable quantities of butter and cheese in this country.

The principal commodities exported from hence are, horses, sheep, cheese, and the produce they procure from the neighboring provinces, such as fish and lumber from the Massachuset's and New Hampshire; flour, beef, and pork, from Philadelphia, New York, and Connecticut, which they commonly pay for in rum, sugar, molasses, imported from the West Indies, in tea from Holland, or in slaves from the coasts of Africa.

The form of government here is in all respects the same as in the colony of Connecticut. They are not, however, so scrupulous in keeping up to the terms of



their charter, often dispensing with it in some pretty essential points, and taking liberties, not only detrimental to the other provinces, but even to the nation, especially in times of war, by carrying on an illicit trade with the enemy, and supplying them with the most material articles. This they have repeatedly done with impunity, to my certain knowledge, in the course of the late war, when many scores of vessels went loaded with beef, pork, flour, &c. under the pretext of flags, which, for a certain consideration, could at any time be procured from their Governor, when at the same time perhaps they carried not more than one or two French prisoners, dividing the crew of one French merchantman they had taken, among a whole fleet of flags of truce, laden with articles more welcome to the enemy than all the prisoners, with the ship and cargo, they took from them. Nor can it be greatly wondered at that their Governor should fall in with so clandestine a method for the procurement of a livelihood, when it is considered that they allow him but fifty or sixty dollars per annum for his maintenance; besides, as he is annually elected, so there are always two or more that are competitors for the government; and generally he that distributes the most cash, and gives the best entertainments, let him be merchant, farmer, tradesman, or what he will, is the man who obtains a majority of votes, which fixes him in the chair (death only excepted) for that year. These election-expences generally run high, as each candidate endeavours to excel his competitor (and, if all put together, would amount to a reasonable maintenance) and must be refunded some way or other during his reign who happens to be elected, and provision made to act the same part over again the next year.

There are in this colony men of almost every religious persuasion in the world. The greatest number are



Quakers, and many have no religion at all, or at least profess none ; on which account no questions are here asked, every man being left pretty much to think and act for himself, of which neither the laws nor his neighbours take much cognizance, so greatly is their liberty degenerated into licentiousness. This province is infested with a rascally set of Jews, who fail not to take advantage of the great liberty here given to men of all professions and religions, and are a pest not only to this, but the neighboring provinces.

There is not one free-school in the whole colony, and the education of children, generally, shamefully neglected.

### 1769. Benjamin West.

Benjamin West (1730–1813) was a native of Rehoboth, Massachusetts. For some years he was a bookseller in Providence, Rhode Island, but finally turned his attention to mathematics and astronomy. From 1786 to 1799 he was professor of mathematics and natural philosophy at Brown University. In 1812–1813 he was postmaster of Providence. He published a series of almanacs for the years 1763–1793. The following quotation is copied from the *New England Almanack*, for 1769.

STAGE-COACHES, PASSAGE-BOATS AND THE MAILS,  
TO AND FROM PROVIDENCE, R. I., IN 1759.

The Providence coaches, kept by Mr. Thomas Sabin and Knight Dexter, Esq., go twice a week from Provi-

dence to Boston, performing their respective stages in a day.

The Norwich coach comes once a week from Mr. Azariah Lathrop's, in Norwich, to Dr. Samuel Carew's, on the west side of the Great Bridge, in Providence, where travellers will meet with the best entertainment. The stage performed in a day.

The Providence Passage-boats, kept by Mr. Joshua Hacker and Messieurs Thomas and Benjamin Lindsey, ply every day from Providence to Newport, and perform the passage, wind and weather permitting, in three hours.

Mr. Peter Mumford, Post Rider, leaves Newport, with the Western and Southern Mails, on Friday morning, arrives at Providence the same night, sets out for Boston on Saturday morning, which he reaches at night, and returns with the Boston Mail on Monday, performing his stage once a week.

## 1770. Alexander Cluny.

Alexander Cluny was an English, or Scotch, merchant and traveller, who published his observations upon the American colonies in the form of a series of letters addressed to the "Right Honourable Earl of . . ." In the second letter the "traveller" says, "I have the Honour to inform your Lordship of the Discoveries I made in the Year 1744; as also that since that Time I have traversed the whole Coast of *America*, from *Lat. 68, North*, to *Cape Florida*, and penetrating some thousands of Miles westward, into the Wilderness, many

Parts of which were never trodden before by European feet." He also says that he has been a colonial merchant for more than thirty years. Dibdin's "Library Companion" says that he was the "first to give accurate intelligence of Hudson's Bay, and to institute an inquiry about a more successful commerce with the Americans." The extract given is taken from *The American Traveller* (2d ed. London, 1770), p. 51.

COMMODITIES exported from *Great Britain* to *Connecticut*, *Rhode Island* and *New Hampshire*.

Wrought-Iron, Steel, Copper, Brass, Pewter and Lead—Woolen Cloths—Stuffs—Flannels—Colchester Bays—Long-Ells—British, Irish, and Foreign-Linens—Silks—Gold and Silver Lace—Millenary, Haberdashery, and Hosiery-Wares—Hats—Gloves—Manchester Goods—Birmingham and Sheffield Wares—Hemp—Sail-Cloth—Cordage—Upholstery and Saddlery Wares—Cabinet-Maker's Goods—Painter's Colours—Ship-Chandlery Wares—Earthen Ware—India Goods—Grindstones—Fishing Tackle—Cheese—Pickles—Toys—Seeds—Tobacco-pipes—Strong Beer—Wines—Spirits—Medicinal Drugs—all which cost at an Average of three Years, £12,000.

COMMODITIES exported from *Connecticut*, *Rhode Island* and *New Hampshire*.

Masts, Boards, Joists, Staves, &c.....	£30,000
Salted Beef—Pork—Hams—Butter—Cheese	
Callivances—and Flax Seed, .....	15,000
Whale and other Fish-Oil, 1500 Tons—at	
£15—.....	22,500
Pickled Mackarel, Shads, and other Fish,..	7,000
Horses and Live Stock,.....	25,000
Potash—6000 Barrels—at 50s .....	15,000
	<hr/> £114,500

1771 Rev. Morgan Edwards.

Morgan Edwards (1722–1795), was born in Wales, educated in England, and ordained to the Baptist ministry in Ireland. He came to America in 1761, and became pastor of the Baptist church in Philadelphia. In 1770 he resigned his position, and took up the life of a travelling preacher and lecturer. He took a prominent part in founding Rhode Island college, now Brown University, and spent much time in collecting materials for a history of the Baptist denomination in America. During the Revolution his sympathies were Loyalist. The extract given is taken from his “Materials for a history of the Baptists in Rhode Island,” as published in Vol. VI. of the *Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society*, pp. 313–355, *passim*.

#### PROVIDENCE.

This church is usually distinguished by the above name, which is the name of the town where the meeting-house is, in the township of Providence and county of the same. The house is 41 feet by 35, and pretty well finished, with pews and galleries. It was erected about the year 1722, 1726, on a lot of 112 feet by 77, partly the gift of Rev. Pardon Tillinghast and partly the purchase of the congregation. It is situated towards the north end of the town, having the main street to the front and the river to the back. No estate belongs to it, for which reason the salary of the minister (Rev. James Manning) is reputed no more than 50 £ a year. The character of it is that of General Baptist, holding

the six points, though the minister and several of the congregation are calvanistic in sentiments, and slack about laying on of hands. The families belonging to them are about 250, whereof 118 \* persons are baptized and in communion, which is here celebrated every S. in the month.

From Providence we shall pass to the next church in point of seniority, viz.—Newport—I distinguish this church by the name of the town; but the other churches in town (which are the offspring of this) I will distinguish by the names of the streets where the meeting-houses are. Newport is on Rhode Island, in a township and county of the same name, 32 miles S. b. E. from Providence, and 348 miles N. E. b. E. h. E. from Philadelphia. The meeting-house belonging to Newport church is in Bull street, built in 1738, and well finished, with pews and galleries. Its dimensions are 40 feet by 30.† The lot on which it stands is 73 feet by 64, the gift of Messrs. Colonels Hezekiah Carpenter and Josias Lyndon. The temporalities of the church are, 1. Hundred and fifty pounds, the gift of John Holmes. 2. A farm of 166 acres (with house and out-houses thereon, now rented out for 50*l.*), the gift of Rev. John Clark. The issues and profits were chiefly intended for the minister, though not so expressed in the will for a reason which Mr. Clark communicated to particular friends. 3. A garden in town, the gift of said Mr. Clark.

With these helps, and the rates of the pews, the living is reputed worth 90*l.* a year to the present minister, Rev. Erasmus Kelley. The families belonging to the congregation are about 50, whereof 37 persons are baptized and in the communion, which is here celebrated the last Sunday in the month. The character

\* This was their state in 1771.

† About 60 feet.—(Note by another hand.)

of this church for some years past has been that of *General Baptist*, but as the minister and several of the members are of the sentiments of the Particular Baptists it is supposed it will return to what it was at first. They also have re-admitted psalmody, and laying on of hands. This was their state in the year 1771.

The second church of Newport is in Farewell Street. And I would distinguish this church by the name of the street where the meeting-house is, because it will be better than to distinguish it by the name of its minister (for the time being) as has been the case hitherto. The house is 76 feet by 52, and stands on a lot of about a hundred feet square with a school-house and stabling.\* The lot was purchased by the congregation at several times, and is a part of the estate of the famous William Coddington. The house at first was very small; in 1725 it was enlarged to 52 feet by 34; in 1749 it was enlarged again, to 62 feet by 52; and in 1768, to its present dimensions. It is pretty well finished, with pews and galleries, but too large for the speaker. The temporalities of this church are: 1. 37£ 10s., the gift of Daniel Sanford, (O. T. 1000£). 2. 11£ 3s., (O. T. 300£), the gift of Joseph Sanford. 3. 28£ 4s. (O. T. 750£), the gift of the same person, for the use of the poor. With the above helps and perquisites, the living is reputed worth 100£ a year to the present minister, Rev. Gardner Thurston.

The families belonging to the congregation are about 250, whereof 230 . . . are baptized and in the communion, which is here celebrated the first Sunday in the month. The denomination of this church is that of *General Baptist*, (with exception of many individuals), holding the six points, and using psalmody.

The third church of Newport is in Sabbath Street.

\* 32 miles S. by E. from Providence, and 348 from Philadelphia.  
—(Note by another hand.)



The place of worship is 38 feet by 26, and well finished with pews, galleries, and a clock. It was erected in 1730, on a lot of 85 feet by 40, purchased by the congregation.\* The temporalities are, 1. A dwelling-house, let for 10*l.* 10*s.* a year, the gift partly of the Hon. Richard Ward, partly of Capt. Joshua Sanders, partly of Sarah Arnold. 2. Six pounds 3*s.* the gift of Joseph Sanford. With these helps and perquisites the living is reputed worth 40*l.* a year to the present minister, Rev. John Maxson. The families belonging to the congregation are about 39, whereof 54 persons are baptized and in the communion, which is here celebrated the last Saturday in the month. The distinction of this church is that of Seventh day baptist, holding general redemption, laying on of hands, using psalmody, &c. This was their state in 1771.

These are all the baptist churches in the town of Newport, or in Rhode Island. There is something like a church who meet in the house that was built by the Moravians, about ——— years ago. This society of the *queer ones* was gathered March 4, 1770, but in less than a year broke to pieces, their number was 17. On the 14th of April last eight of them were gathered together again, and (with a few more which Dawson baptised), reconstituted, but are not likely to hold together long. This Henry Dawson arrived from Dr. Gifford's church in London, to New York, in 1767, and offered himself to our association, but being under the censure of his church, was rejected again and again, so that he stands alone railing at associations and regular ministry.

The next church we shall mention is that of Warren. It is so distinguished from the village where the meeting-house is, in a township of the same name, and

\* It is distant 32 miles S. by E. from Providence, and 348 from Philadelphia.—(Note by another hand.)



county of Bristol, 11 miles S. by E. from Providence and 328 miles from Philadelphia. The house was erected in 1763, on a lot of 50 rods square, purchased by the congregation. Its dimensions are 52 feet by 44, with pews, galleries, and a little turret, wherein is a bell, but the galleries are not finished. On the same lot is a handsome parsonage house, valued at 14*l.* a year, which is all the estate belonging to the church. The living including this is reputed worth 74*l.* to the present minister, Rev. Charles Thomson. The families belonging to the congregation are about ———, whereof fifty-six persons are baptised and in communion, which is here celebrated the ——— Sunday in the month. The character of this church is *Particular Baptist*, holding laying on of hands no bar to communion, and using psalmody. This is their present state, (1771).

From this we pass over the bay to Greenwich. This is usually distinguished as above from the township, but should rather be called Newtown, which is the name of the village where the meeting-house is, in the county of Kent, 15 miles S. S. W. from Providence and ———miles from Philadelphia. The house is 30 feet square, erected in 1729, on a lot of 30 rods by 5, the gift of Clement Weaver. The situation is beautiful, being rising ground commanding a prospect of the town and harbor and a fine country. This was one reason urged why the college should be placed here. The character of this church is that of *General Baptist*, holding the six points; of late they have admitted psalmody, and are grown more moderate in sentiments. No estate belongs to this church; nor any fixed salary for the minister, though they could easily raise him 40*l.* a year. The families belonging to the congregation are about———. whereof 52 persons are baptized and in the communion, which is here celebrated every ——Sabbath in a month.

The next church we shall mention is Cranston. It is usually distinguished as above from the name of the township where the place of worship is, in the county of Providence, about 6 miles S. W. from the town, and 312 miles from Philadelphia. The place of worship was originally a dwelling house purchased by the church in 1770, and made commodious for divine service. The character of the church is that of *Particular Baptists*, using psalmody and laying on of hands. Temporalities they have not; nor any fixed salary for their minister, but are able to raise him about 30*l.* if they were willing. The families belonging to them are about——, whereof 40 persons are baptized and in communion of the church, which is here celebrated the——Sunday in each month. . . . .

This college is allowed to be a neat pile of building and most pleasantly situated. The building is of brick, 150 feet by 46, four stories high, exclusive of the cellar, which is partly above ground. In the middle on each side is a projection of fifteen feet, making the whole resemble a cross. In one of these projections is the Chapel, in the opposite the dining room; above is the library, the apparatus room, etc. The chambers are 52 in number, opening to large isles, running the whole length of the building. Upwards of a 100 scholars may be here accommodated. The situation of the college is remarkably airy, healthful and pleasant, being the summit of a hill pretty easy of ascent, and commanding a prospect of the town of Providence below, of the Narragansett Bay and the islands, and of an extensive country variegated with hills and dales, woods and plains, &c. Surely, this spot was made for a seat of the muses.

## 1771, 1772. President Ezra Stiles.

Ezra Stiles (1727–1795) was born in North Haven, Connecticut, where his father was pastor, and was graduated at Yale. In 1756 he was induced to become pastor of the Second Church in Newport. In 1778 he became president of Yale College, and held that position until his death. His reputation as a scholar and writer was great both in this country and in Europe. This quotation is taken from his Diary, as quoted by President Barnas Sears, in his *Centennial Discourse at Brown University*, pp. 100, 101. The Diary, a very extensive and interesting manuscript, now preserved at Yale University, is to be printed by that institution in commemoration of its two-hundredth anniversary.

Nov. 17, 1771. The town of Providence is 500 dwelling-houses and about 4000 inhabitants, or half as big as Newport. . . .

Aug. 25, 1772. The town of Providence is now, 1772, about 400 houses, 500 families. I estimate 100 families real Baptists; 140 political Baptists and nothingarians; 140 Mr. Snow's Congregation,  $\frac{2}{3}$  Baptists,  $\frac{1}{3}$  Presbyterians; 60 Pedobaptist Congregationalists; 40 Episcopalians; 20 families Quakers, a few Sandemanians, and perhaps 20 or 40 persons Deists.

## 1772. President James Manning.

James Manning (1738–1791), a Baptist minister, born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, was chosen by the Philadelphia Association as a leader in the attempt to establish a Baptist college in Rhode Island, became in 1765 the first president of Rhode Island College, and held the office until his death. He was also pastor of the First Baptist Church of Providence, to which position he was called shortly after the removal of the college to Providence, in 1770. The present church was built during his ministry, in 1774. The following letter is quoted from *The Life, Times and Correspondence of James Manning, and the Early History of Brown University*, by Dr. Reuben A. Guild, p. 194.

The college edifice is erected on a most beautiful eminence, in the neighborhood of Providence, commanding a most charming and variegated prospect; a large, neat brick building, and so far completed as to receive the students, who now reside there, the whole number of whom is twenty-two. We have the prospect of further additions; yet our numbers will probably be small until we are better furnished with a library and philosophical apparatus. At present we have about two hundred and fifty volumes, and these not well chosen, being such as our friends could best spare. Our apparatus consists of a pair of globes, two microscopes, and an electrical machine; to this we are desirous of making the addition of an air pump, if one reputable can be purchased for £22 10s. sterling; a sum which two young men informed me they intended

to give towards an apparatus or library. If, therefore, it would not be too much trouble to inform me whether or not that sum is sufficient, I shall receive it as a particular favor; for if not, we shall appropriate it to some other use.

Our whole college fund consists of about £900 sterling, being the whole sum collected abroad; for no money collected without the colony is made use of in the building, but solely applied to endowing it, with the strictest regard to the donor's intent. The interest of this sum is quite insufficient to provide for tuition, as two of us are now employed, and we stand in need of further help.

### 1773. Daniel Horsmanden.

Horsmanden (1691–1778) was an eminent colonial lawyer, who was appointed Recorder and Chief Justice of New York in 1763. He was one of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the burning of the “Gaspee,” and the following quotation is taken from a letter of his of February 21, 1773, to the Earl of Dartmouth, relating to that affair, in *New York Colonial Documents*, VIII. 351.

My Lord, as to the Govern<sup>t</sup> (if it deserves that name) it is a downright Democracy; the Gov<sup>r</sup> is a mere nominal one, and therefore a Cypher, without power or authority, entirely controuled by the populace elected annually, as all other Magistrates & officers whatsoever. The Governor treated the Commissioners with great

decency and respect, and to do that Gentleman justice, behaved with great propriety as a Commissioner, excepting his communicating your Lord<sup>y</sup>'s letter to the Corporation, which indeed he seemed constrained to do under the above circumstances.

To shew that the Gov<sup>r</sup> has not the least Power or Authority he could not command the Sheriff or a Constable to attend us ; he prevailed with them indeed, but in expectation of being paid their daily wages by the Commissioners, so that they were hired for this service at our expence, and even for expresses sent to summon witnesses the Commiss<sup>rs</sup> found it necessary to advance their own money ; also for the very fire wood expended for our accommodation in the Council Chamber on this occasion ; this, My Lord, we readily disbursed and all other contingencies relying upon the honor of Govern<sup>t</sup>.

### 1773. Hugh Finlay.

Hugh Finlay was surveyor of post-roads, for the crown, in North America. Shortly before the outbreak of the Revolutionary war he made an inspection of the post offices between Falmouth, Massachusetts [Portland, Maine] and Casco Bay, and Savannah, Georgia.

The following account of his experiences is taken from his *Journal*, which extends from September 13, 1773, to June 26, 1774. Published in Brooklyn, in 1867, pp. 28-32.

Peter Mumford rides between Boston and New Port in Rhode Island ; he has never given bond nor did he



ever take a Post rider's oath. He avers that he is an expeditious rider and faithful to the office ; publick report is against him ; it is said that he carries more letters for his own private profit than are sent from all the offices he stops at, to the office at Boston. He transacts a great deal of business on the road, loads his carriage with bundles, buys and sells on commission, and in short but carries the mail by the by as it helps to defray his expences. Peter Mumfords ride from Boston to New Port is 80 miles passing thro' Providence, Warren and Bristol for which service he is obliged to keep three horses and is paid £40 Str. per ann.

He should leave Boston at three o'clock Monday afternoon, but I am told that it is 5 or 6 ere he takes horse, he arrives at Providence, 45 miles, at 9 o'clock next morning and at New Port, 35 miles farther, at 5 o'clock in the evening of Tuesday. On his return from New Port with the western mails he leaves that office on Friday, half past two P. M., passing thro' Bristol and Warren he arrives at Providence between 7 and 8 o'clock on Saturday morning, he leaves it at 9 and arrives at Boston at six in the evening in fine weather.

Thus 26 hours are requir'd to ride 80 miles. The reason of this is, the rider sleeps by the way. If this ride is too much for one man to perform let the ride be divided in two, and let there be no sleeping. There's three ferrys between Providence and New Port, one near to Providence half a mile wide, another at Warren a skow ferry, and one from the Main to Rhode Island a mile over, they are all well attended. Peter Mumford lives at New Port, were his ride curtailed one half he would stop at Providence. New Port has but little connection with Providence but their intercourse with Boston is great—by having two riders it



wou'd be found difficult to transact business by means of the couriers between these two places.

Left Boston the 25th and rode 45 miles to

*Providence.*

The road is good tho' a little rocky in some places. John Carter is Deputy here, he is a printer, seemingly an active sensible man : he has had charge of the office two years.

26th.—At the Post-office—or rather the printing office ; for there's no apartment appropriated for the rece't and delivery of letters, tho' they are kept lock'd up. I find that Mr. Carter has never return'd his accounts. He has been in dayly expectation to receive the books of the office, the instructions and the forms from one Cole, the former deputy, but he has put him off with excuses from day to day. This Cole's now in the country attending a county Court, when he returns, Mr. Carter expects the books &c. will be deliver'd up to him, and he promises to transmit his accounts and remit whatever may be due, to the Comptroller in three weeks from this day.

Mr. Carter represents “that the mails from the westward by a late alteration in the Post route now cross *five ferry's* between Naraganset and Providence, whereas by the old route there's not so much as one ferry to cross.”

For the mails to cross five ferrys, in the small distance of 50 miles (two of them dangerous in winter) cannot be for the Kings service. As an addition to this representation, he begs leave to observe, that after the mails from the Westward arrive at New London, the printer there extracts all advices from newspapers, which requires considerable time ; the New London paper is afterwards printed containing these extracts,

and it is sent to him by a private conveyance by way of Norwich, by which the New York paper is also sent to him, both which he receives 12 sometimes 14 hours before the arrival of the Post."

Left Providence the 27th and the 28th arriv'd at *New Port, Thomas Vernon, Depy.* He [Mr. Vernon] is of opinion that much time is lost by Peter Mumford between New Port and Boston. He says that theres two Post offices in New Port, the King's and Mumfords, and that the revenue of the last is greatest. It is the same in Boston, both Mumford and the rider of the upper Stages (Hyde) receive much postage for which they do not account. It is common for people who expect letters by Post finding none at the Post Office to say "*well there must be letters, we'll find them at Mumfords.*" It is next to impossible to put a stop to this practice in the present universal opposition to every thing connected with Great Britain. Were any Deputy Post Master to do his duty, and make a stir in such matter, he would draw on himself the odium of his neighbours and be mark'd as the friend of Slavery and oppression and a declar'd enemy to America.

The two ferrys from Rhode Island over to Narraganset are each three miles and a half over; in winter when the wind is ahead, with floating ice, it is both very difficult, and exceedingly dangerous to pass, and sometimes tho' but seldom the course of the Post is stop'd for a week, this does not happen above twice or thrice in a year.

## 1775. Elkanah Watson.

Elkanah Watson (1758-1842), passed his youth in Rhode Island. When fifteen, he was apprenticed to

John Brown, the Providence merchant, from whom, as he tells us in his *Memoirs*, he received a father's kindness. He was one of a volunteer expedition to rescue Mr. Brown, who was captured by the British when sailing from Newport to Providence, and "sent to Boston in irons, charged with heading a party in 1772, disguised as Indians, which burnt his Majesty's schooner Gaspee in Providence river. The charge was true, although the British government could never obtain any evidence of the fact." (*Memoirs*, 20, 21). Mr. Brown's release was obtained through the efforts of his brother Moses. In 1789, Mr. Watson removed from Providence to Albany. He did much to encourage the establishment of the canal system in New York. This extract is taken from his *Memoirs*, ed. 1856, p. 67.

After all my wanderings and observation of other parts of the Confederacy, I still look upon Rhode Island as one of the most delightful and interesting of the States. The year before the Revolution, it contained nearly sixty thousand souls. It produced butter, beef, lumber, horses, pot and pearl ashes, and two hundred thousand pounds of inferior tobacco.

Narraganset Bay, formed by Rhode Island on one side, and the fertile shores of Narraganset upon the other, and studded with numerous lovely islands, presents the most delightful scenery.

Newport is beautifully situated, and was a favorite resort of Southern people, on account of its cool and salubrious position. It had been one of the most commercial places in America, but was then falling into decay. Its fortunes were waning before the superior activity and enterprise of its rival, Providence.

This city had, within forty years, emerged from the obscurity of an inconsiderable village into a great trading mart, that embraced a body of perhaps the most intelligent merchants on the continent. It contained at this time, about five thousand inhabitants.

### 1780. Claude Blanchard.

Blanchard (1742–1802) was a member of the War Department in France, and Commissary-in-chief with Rochambeau in his American campaign, during which the “Journal” was written. M. Blanchard held the position of chairman of the various military committees of the French Revolutionary Assembly. He fell under the ban of the Committee of Public Safety, but after that body’s disappearance, he became Commissary again, and served his country in that capacity until his death, in 1802. The extract given is taken from his *Journal* as translated by W. Duane, and edited by T. Balch, Albany 1876, pp. 41–44, 46, 55, 63–65, 71, 72, 78–80.

On the 12th of July, 1780, the day after our arrival . . . I placed my foot upon the earth at Newport. This city is small, but handsome; the streets are straight and the houses, although mostly of wood, of agreeable shape. In the evening there was an illumination. I entered the house of an inhabitant, who received me very well; I took tea there, which was served by a young lady.

On the 13th, I was at Papisquash on the main land, twenty leagues from Newport, to examine an establishment which M. de Corny had arranged for our sick. I stopped at Bristol, a village not far from Papisquash, and looked for an inn where I might dine ; but I found nothing there but coffee and badly-raised bread ; we were obliged to have it toasted to be able to eat it. . . . We were obliged to pay 12 livres for the passage of a ferry-boat : they asked 30 of us : we found on our way some pretty houses ; but the country is generally barren in the part which we traversed ; there are few trees and they not very hardy. . . .

On the 17th, in the morning, I chanced to enter a school. The master seemed to me a very worthy man ; he was teaching some children of both sexes ; all were neatly clad, the room in which the school was kept was also very clean. I saw the writing of these children, it appeared to me to be handsome, among others, that of a young girl 9 or 10 years old, very pretty and very modest and such as I would like my own daughter to be, when she is as old ; she was called *Abigail Earl*, as I perceived upon her copy-book, on which her name was written, I wrote it myself, adding to it "very pretty." This school had really interested me, and the master had not the air of a missionary but the tone of the father of a family.

On the 18th, I visited in company with M. de Rochambeau, an Anabaptist temple, where we established a hospital.

On the 19th, I was at Papisquash, where there were already 280 sick persons ; but they were far from being provided with everything that was necessary for them ; fortunately, they were in a pretty good air. Papisquash forms a kind of landscape surrounded by trees. The commonest are acacias, pear-trees and cherry-trees ; the ground is sown with flax and maize, with a little barley and rye. . . .

We lived on good terms with the inhabitants of this neighborhood. They are affable, well clad, very cleanly, and all tall. The women enjoy the same advantages, have fair skins and are generally pretty. They all have oxen and cows, at least as handsome as those of our Poitou; their cows are not stabled and pass the night in the fields; they give much milk. . . .

The air of Rhode Island is good; it is hot there, but only in the middle of the day; for the mornings and evenings are cool without being damp. . . .

On Thursday I went to Providence with M. Demars. I have already spoken of this city which I prefer to Newport; it seems more lively, more addicted to commerce, more supplies are to be found there. We there established a very considerable hospital in a very handsome house, formerly occupied as a college. . . .

In the afternoon, we observed a plant which is very common in the country. The botanists call it *Racemus Americana*; in France, it is found only in the gardens of the botanists. We saw no other peculiar plant anywhere else, but much wild chickory and sorrel thorn. . . .

To-day I walked much through the city; I especially visited the temple which is pretty large, although built of wood; it is very clean. I also ascended the steeple, which, like all of them in America, is over-loaded with carvings and ornaments, painted with different colors; it is likewise entirely of wood.

On the 14th, we had rain until nine in the morning; the remainder of the day was clear. I profited by it to walk alone in the woods and upon the hills with which the city of Providence is surrounded; these solitary walks have always been agreeable to me. . . .

[On] the 15th, I was invited to a party in the country, to which I went. It was a sort of pic-nic given by a score of men to a company of ladies. The pur-



pose of this party was to eat a turtle, weighing three or four hundred pounds, which an American vessel had just brought from one of our islands. This meat did not seem to me to be very palatable ; it is true that it was badly cooked. There were some quite handsome women ; before dinner they kept themselves in a different room from the men, they also placed themselves at table all on the same side, and the men, on the other. They danced after dinner to the music of some instruments of Lauzun's legion, which had been brought there expressly. Neither the men nor the women dance well ; all stretch out and lengthen their arms in a way far from agreeable. . . .

Americans are slow and do not decide promptly in matters of business. They love money and *hard* money ; it is thus that they designate specie to distinguish it from paper money, which loses prodigiously. This loss varies according to circumstances and according to the provinces. Whilst I am writing, at Providence and Newport it loses sixty for one. . . . I speak of this paper money because we are beginning to make use of it in our army to pay some daily expenses, but only to the people of the country ; . . . On the 24th, I dined at Providence with Dr. Bowen, a physician and a respectable old man. . . . They do not eat soups and do not serve up ragouts at these dinners ; but boiled and roast and much vegetables. They drink nothing but cider and Madeira wine with water. The dessert is composed of preserved quinces or pickled sorrel. The Americans eat the latter with the meat. They do not take coffee immediately after dinner, but it is served three or four hours afterwards with tea ; . . . this use of tea and coffee is universal in America. Breakfast is an important affair with them. Besides tea and coffee, they put on table roasted meats with butter, pies and ham ; nevertheless they sup and in



the afternoon they again take tea. Thus the Americans are almost always at the table ; and as they have little to occupy them, as they go out little in winter and spend whole days along side of their fires and their wives, without reading and without doing anything, going so often to table is a relief and a preventive of *ennui*. Yet they are not great eaters.

They are very choice in cups and vases for holding tea and coffee, in glasses, decanters and other matters of this kind and in habitual use. They make use of wall-papers which serve for tapestry ; they have them very handsome. In many of the houses there are carpets also, even upon their stairs. In general, the houses are very pleasant and kept with extreme neatness, with the mechanic and the countryman as well as with the merchant and the general. Their education is very nearly the same ; so that a mechanic is often called to their assemblies, where there is no distinction, no separate order. I have already mentioned that the inhabitants of the entire country are proprietors. They till the earth and drive their oxen themselves. . . . Burning a great quantity of wood is one of their luxuries, it is common. . . . Yet wood is very dear owing to the difficulty of transporting it. It costs us for a league about 15 livres a cord. . . .

I proceeded to Coventry, two leagues from Greenwich. General Greene's residence is there. My object was to pay a visit to the wife of General Greene, whom I happened to see at Newport and Providence. Mrs. Greene received us very kindly. She is amiable, genteel and rather pretty. As there was no bread in her house, some was hastily made ; it was of meal and water mixed together ; which was then toasted at the fire ; small slices of it were served up to us. It is not much for a Frenchman. As for the Americans, they eat very little bread. . . . Another country-house is

pretty near, inhabited by two ladies, who compose all the society that Mrs. Greene has; in the evening she invited them to her house, and we danced.

## 1780. Count Axel de Fersen.

Count Fersen (1755–1810) was a Swedish soldier in the French service, and colonel of the body-guard of Louis XVI. He came to the United States as a member of Rochambeau's staff, and wrote interesting letters to his father in Europe, describing the men and manners of the time. On his return to France, Count Fersen attached himself to the royal family, and planned their escape from Paris (the "flight to Varennes"). On their capture, he escaped, and returned to Sweden, where he was killed in a riot. The extract given is taken from the *Magazine of American History*, II. 303.

You know the French, my dear father, and what are called the Court people (*gens de la cour*), sufficiently to understand their despair at being obliged to pass the winter quietly at Newport, far from their mistresses and the pleasures of Paris; no suppers, no theatres, no balls; they are in despair; only an order to march on the enemy will console them. We had some extreme heat here during August; I have never felt anything like it in Italy. Now the air is cooler, the climate superb and the country charming. We were on the mainland about eight days ago with the General. I was the only one of his aids who accompanied him. We remained ten days, and saw the finest country imagin-

able, the inhabitants well-to-do, but without luxury or display ; they are content with the simple necessities of life which, in other countries are left to the lower class ; their clothing is simple but good, and their habits have not yet been spoiled by European luxury. This country will be happy if it enjoy a long peace, and if the two parties which at present divide it do not bring it to the fate of Poland and of so many other republics. These two parties are called the *whigs* and the *tories*. The first is wholly for liberty and independence ; it is made up of people of the lowest birth and no property ; the greater part of those who live in the interior of the country belong to it. The *tories* are for the English, or it is more correct to say for peace, not caring much whether they are free or dependent ; they belong to a higher class, and alone possess any property in the country. Some have relatives and lands in England ; others, to preserve those which they had in the country, embraced the English cause, which was the stronger. When the whigs are the stronger they pillage the others to the best of their ability. This is nursing a hatred and animosity between them which will be extinguished with difficulty, and remain the source of a thousand troubles. . . .

You see, my dear father, by this showing, which is very exact, the reasons which stand in the way of the formation of an army, which can only be raised and kept up by means of money ; add to this that the spirit of patriotism only exists in the chief and principal men in the country, who are making very great sacrifices ; the rest who make up the great mass think only of their personal interests. Money is the controlling idea in all their actions, they only think of how it may be gained ; every one is for himself, no one for the general good. The inhabitants of the coast, even the best Whigs, carry to the English fleet anchored in Gardner

bay provisions of all kinds, and this because they are well paid ; they overcharge us mercilessly ; everything is enormously dear ; in all the dealings we have had with them they have treated us more like enemies than friends. Their greed is unequalled, money is their God ; virtue, honor, all count for nothing to them compared with the precious metal. I do not mean that there are no estimable people of noble and generous character ; there are many, but I speak of the nation in general ; I believe they are more like the Dutch than the English.

### 1780. Marquis de Chastellux.

François Jean, Marquis de Chastellux (1734–1788), was a French soldier and author who served in America under Rochambeau. He wrote several works relating to America. His *Voyage en l'Amérique Septentrionale dans les Années 1780–2* (Paris, 1786 ; English translation by George Grieve, London, 1787), includes his journal written when traveling from Newport to Philadelphia and Virginia.

Chastellux was a member of the order of the Cincinnati. The extract given is taken from his *Voyage en l'Amérique*, p. 6 *et seq.* [November, 1780.]

The 12th I set out at half-past eight for Providence [from Warren], where I arrived at noon. I alighted at the College, that is to say, at our Hospital, which I examined, and dined with Mr. Blanchard, Commissary of war. At half past four I went to Col-

onel Bowen's, where I had lodged in my first journey ; I drank tea there with several ladies, one of whom, rather handsome, was called Miss Angel. I was then conducted to Mrs. Varnum's, where I again found company, and from thence to Governor Bowen's, who gave me a bed.

The 13th I breakfasted with Colonel Peck ; He is an amiable and polite young man, who passed the last summer with General Heath at Newport. He received me in a charming small house, where he lived with his wife, who is young also, and has a pleasing countenance, but without anything striking. This little establishment, where comfort and simplicity reign, gave an idea of that sweet and serene state of happiness, which appears to have taken refuge in the New World, after compounding it with pleasure, to which it has left the Old.

The town of Providence is built on the bank of a river only six miles long, and which disembogues itself in the Gulph wherein are Rhode Island, Connecticut, Providence, &c. It has only one street, which is very long ; the suburb, which is considerable, is on the other side of the river. This town is handsome, the houses are not spacious, but well-built, and properly arranged within. It is pent<sup>d</sup> in between two chains of mountains, one to the north, and the other to the southwest, which causes an insupportable heat in summer ; but it is exposed to the north-west wind, which rakes it from one end to the other, and renders it extremely cold in winter. Its situation is very advantageous for commerce ; which accordingly is very considerable in times of peace. Merchant ships may load and unload their cargoes in the town itself, and ships of war cannot approach the harbour. Their commerce is the same with that of Rhode Island and Boston ; they export slaves, and salt provisions, and bring back salt, and a

great quantity of melasses, sugar, and other articles from the West Indies; they fit out vessels also for the cod and whale fishery. The latter is carried on successfully between Cape Cod and Long Island; but they go often as far as Baffin's Streights, and Falkland's Island. The inhabitants of Providence, like those of Newport, also carry on the Guinea trade; they buy slaves there and carry them to the West-Indies, where they take bills of exchange on Old England, for which they receive woollens, stuffs, and other merchandize.\*

## 1780. Rev. Dr. Samuel Hopkins.

Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), the eminent theologian, was at two separate times pastor of one of the Newport churches. He was much interested in the emancipation of negro slaves. He freed his own, and originated the idea of sending the liberated slaves to Africa. He was an exceedingly modest and devout man, and the founder of a school of modified Calvinism known as Hopkinsianism. He is said to have been the original of one of the principal characters in Mrs. Stowe's "Minister's Wooing." This quotation is taken from *Sketches of the Life of the late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D., written by himself*, Hartford, 1805, pp. 78, 81.

\* Here are several places of public worship, an university, and other public buildings; and a very brisk trade was carried on even at the worst period of the war for American commerce, viz. in 1782. Mr. *Welcome Arnold*, a great plumber, and Delegate to Congress from this state, has changed his name by act of Assembly, since the detection of *Benedict Arnold*. (TRANSLATOR.)



My church and congregation were greatly diminished. Some had died, while the British were here, and many had removed into the country, who had not yet returned, and numbers were so settled in the country, that they were not likely to return soon, if ever. And those who remained in town were so reduced in their worldly circumstances, and dejection of their minds, by living so long under the tyranny of the British, that, excepting a very few, they had not courage enough to think or do much to preserve the congregation from coming to nothing, by supporting the preaching of the gospel. And it was a particular discouragement that the meeting house was so damaged, by being made a barrack for soldiers, that we could not meet in it. The bell was taken away by the British, when they left the town; and the pulpit and most of the inside work was demolished or taken away. And the few who were here had not courage or ability to repair it. I continued more than a year among them, while in this situation, having no support, but what was given by a few generous friends; the congregation doing nothing, as a congregation, not having courage to attempt to have so much as a public contribution for a considerable time.

A better, though precarious, settlement was soon made.

The church and congregation have been enabled, by divine providence, in some good measure to repair the meeting house; and do yet subsist. But they are so diminished by deaths and removals; that the appearance now is, that when death shall remove me from them, which may be expected to be soon, they will be dissolved as a church and congregation, unless there should be an unexpected revolution in their dispositions and circumstances. But this I would leave with him, who knows what to do with me, with them, and with all things else.



## 1781. Rev. Dr. Samuel Hopkins.

See above, p. 89. The letter is quoted from Dr. Stiles's Diary (upon which see p. 72), in Dr. Edwards A. Parks's *Memoir of Hopkins*, Boston, 1854, p. 107.

"New Haven, 1781. Received a letter from Rev. Mr. Hopkins, dated Newport, January 26 ; wherein he says, speaking of the state of religion there, ' Every thing is dark and discouraging here, with respect to the all-important interest. The people in general are going from bad to worse, and I now see no way for my continuing here longer than till spring. Neither your people nor mine are disposed to attend public worship constantly, except a few individuals. There is but little encouragement to preach, where there is so little attention, and so very little concern about any thing invisible.' "

## 1781. Baron Cromot Dubourg.

Cromot Dubourg (1756–1836), entered the French army when twelve, and upon Rochambeau's departure for America was permitted to join the expedition as aid-de-camp. He won some distinction before Yorktown, but upon his return to France devoted his fortunes to those of Royalty, and joined the ranks of the emigrés. He was so fortunate as to be remembered by the restored Bourbons, and was made honorary *maréchal de camp*. Balch says, in his "French in

America" (1895), II. 91, that Dubourg left an unpublished diary of his first campaign in America, in 1781, of which the original has been lost or mislaid. This extract is taken from a text in the *Magazine of American History*, IV. 209, entitled "Diary of a French Officer, 1781 (presumed to be that of Baron Cromot du Bourg, Aid to Rochambeau), from an unpublished Manuscript in the possession of C. Fiske Harris, of Providence, R. I."

May 9, In the morning I left my resting place for Newport at a very early hour. The country seemed to me less wooded but as little improved as the town; as a whole it is not inhabited. The villages are immense. They are some four or five miles in extent and even more and the houses scattered. I passed through Bristol which was formerly quite a commercial town; that was before the war, for it has felt this scourge severely. When the English withdrew they burned more than three-fourths of the houses and they have not yet been rebuilt. I at last crossed Bristol Ferry which separates Rhode Island from the Continent. The arm of the sea is about a mile wide. I am now arrived at Newport and propose to examine the country with a little more care.

(Side Note). Some of the villages appear to me to be from 15 to 20 miles long.

I arrived at Newport the 9th May, 1781, as I have just said, and my first care, after having performed the duties which my service required, was to study the country in which I found myself.

Rhode Island is in its extreme length at most fifteen miles, and the widest part of the Island five.

It must have been one of the most pleasing spots in

the world before the war, since notwithstanding the disasters it has suffered, some of its houses destroyed, and all its woods cut down, the Island is still a charming residence.

The Island is very much cut up, that is all the land belonging to the different proprietors is enclosed by walls of stone piled one upon another or by wooden fences. There are some farms in which barley and other grains grow admirably. Great quantities of Turkey grain, otherwise called maize, are grown here. There are, as in Normandy, extensive orchards and the country bears about the same fruits as those of France. If it were cultivated as our provinces are the productions would be much greater, the soil being very good and the grass superb. It is cut by numerous small streams. The inhabitants are inactive and consequently not laborious.

(Side Note). The measure is here as well as on the Continent by miles as in England—three miles make a league.

There is very little game on the Island, some partridge rather larger than our own, some sea fowl and birds of passage, but there are neither hare nor rabbits nor wild beasts. The birds differ a little from our own—part of the wings of the black bird is red. There is a kind of heron the plumage of which is tinged with various blue—a bird which is called the Widow, the body of which as well as the breast is black, but the head of a very handsome yellow and a part of the wings of the same color. There are Cardinal birds of the same size as the black bird but almost entirely red. The crows are of a smaller kind than ours.

There are cows, pigs and sheep precisely as in France. There are also numbers of geese and turkeys of the same kind as our own; the horses are generally quite good although in less variety than I had sup-

posed, the English having introduced their breed here as well as on the main land. They are extremely dear, a horse which would be worth 20 lois in France, will here bring 40 or 50 at least. Their great merit is in being excellent leapers, being early trained. They have all the gait which we term the amble, of which it is extremely difficult to break them.

The coast of the Island abounds in fish. The cod is very abundant, some sturgeon, great quantities of mackerel, shad, black fish and many varieties of shell fish.

I found the army in the best possible condition, very few sick and the troops in splendid order.

The Island seemed to me to be so fortified that a landing was no way to be feared, at least if one should be made no ill result need be feared from it.

Newport is the only town on the Island, there being besides but a few scattered buildings to which the name of farm houses is given. Three-fourths of these houses are small farms.

There are but two streets of any consequence in the town. It is well built and quite pretty; it must be quite commercial and therefore much more prosperous before the war.

The Fort is to the south west of the town and of considerable size. The troops encamped last year in front of the town to the south west; the camp extends from the south east of the Town almost to the north of it. In front of the port to the south west of the town, a half a mile distant, is Goat Island, upon which there is a battery of eight pieces of twenty-four, which defend the entrance to the Harbor; to the south west of Goat Island the Brenton battery of twelve pieces of twenty-four and four twelve inch mortars, the fire of which crosses that of the vessels in the harbor. The Brenton battery is a half mile from Goat Island.

About three quarters of a mile to the north west of

Goat Island is the Battery of Rose Island of twenty pieces of thirty-six and four mortars of twelve inches upon which the right of the vessels rests ; it defends not only the entrance of the Harbor but reaches everything that might pass it.

The battery of Brenton's Point, of which I have just spoken, is about one and a quarter miles by sea to the south west of the town ; all along the coast to the south west of Brenton's point there are several guard posts and some redoubts which also defend the entrance to the Harbor. To the north west of the town is Coasters Island where there is a battery of three pieces of cannon. It is about three quarters of a mile from the town and a quarter from the coast. This battery commands that part of the entrenched camp which lies to the north of its position.

There are several Guard posts scattered along the coasts with Redoubts at the places where it would be possible for an enemy to land, so that should a descent be effected the smallness of the Island would allow of the troops being moved in a very short time to its centre, there to defend themselves, and they would there have the advantage of the entrenched camp, from which it would be, by reason of its situation, extremely difficult to dislodge them.

As for the Harbor, it seemed to me from the position of the batteries and the range of fire of our Vessels that if they were attacked it would be absolutely impossible for the enemy to force an entrance.

1781. Abbé Claude C. Robin.

The Abbé Robin was a chaplain in Rochambeau's army. He was among the most entertaining of the

French commentators who were "among us, takin' notes" at that time. His *Nouveau Voyage dans l'Amérique Septentrionale en l'Année 1781*, consists of thirteen letters, first published in Paris in 1782. An English edition appeared at Philadelphia in 1783, entitled *New Travels through North America*. The quotation given is taken from this book, p. 22, *et seq.*

*Camp at Philipsburg, July 30, 1781.*

SIR,

I found the army at Providence, encamped on a rising ground [Rochambeau Avenue]. This is a considerable town, and pretty well peopled; some of the houses are built of brick and others of wood; it is situated at the mouth of the river Patuxit, at the bottom of a bay betwixt the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode-Island: This situation affords it a gainful commerce in corn, maize, lumber, and salt provisions for the islands; there are also many vessels built here. . . .

When, at length, arrived at the place destined for our encampment, we have still to wait during the hottest part of the day for the baggage waggons, before we can take any repose. . . . Our young Generals, who have been bred in ease and delicacy, bear up under these fatigues with a degree of resolution that makes me blush for my weakness. . . . they encourage the soldiery under the severity of duty by marching before them on foot.\*

\*The difficulty of providing sufficiency of carriages, and finding provision to support the horses or oxen, obliged Count Rochambeau to order, that no officer should carry with him more than one hundred and fifty pounds weight, including tents, beds, &c and thus it happened in our long march, in a country where there are so few resources, that almost all of us were in want of some one necessary or another.



. . . . .  
The Americans, whom curiosity brings by thousands to our camp, are constantly received with good humour and festivity ; and our military music, of which they are extravagantly fond, is then played for their diversion. At such times officers, soldiers, Americans, of both sexes, all intermingle and dance together ;—it is the feast of equality ; and these are the first fruits of the alliance which is, we hope, to subsist perpetually between the two nations. . . . The familiar appellation of *brother*, given some of them by the Marquis,\* excited their curiosity and respect to a great degree ; and the young American Ladies have always considered it as one of their greatest honours, to have danced with that nobleman. . . .

Before I arrived here, I had no expectations of discovering the traces of the French modes and fashions, in the midst of the wilds and forests of America. The head dresses of all the women, except Quakers, are high, spreading and decked profusely with our gauzes : and here I cannot but reflect on the oddness of their taste, when I find, through the whole state of Connecticut [?], so prevailing an inclination for dress, (I may say to a degree of extravagance) with manners at the same time so simple and so pure, as to resemble those of the ancient patriarchal age. Pulse, Indian corn, and milk are their most common kinds of food ; they also use much *tea*, and this sober infusion constitutes the chief pleasure of their lives ; there is not a single person to be found, who does not drink it out of china cups and saucers, and, upon your entering a house, the greatest mark of civility and welcome they can show you, is to invite you to drink it with them. In countries where the inhabitants live upon foods and

\* M. le Marquis de la Fayette is universally known to the Americans, by his title of Marquis.



drinks of the most substantial kind, it may be useful to the health, but I believe it is prejudicial in those where they subsist mostly on vegetables and milk, especially when the soil, yet too much shaded by the woods, makes them the less nourishing; and perhaps this may be one of the causes, that with a robust and healthy constitution, their lives here are much shorter than those of the inhabitants of other countries. The loss of their teeth is also attributed to the too frequent use of tea; the women, who are commonly very handsome, are often, at eighteen or twenty years of age, entirely deprived of this most precious ornament; though, I am of opinion, this premature decay may be rather the effect of warm bread: for the English, the Flemish, and the Dutch, who are great tea drinkers, preserve their teeth sound a long time.

. . . . .

Scattered about among the forests, the inhabitants have little intercourse with each other, except when they go to church. Their dwelling-houses are spacious, proper, airy, and built of wood, and are at least one story in height, and herein they keep all their furniture and substance. In all of them that I have seen, I never failed to discover traces of their active and inventive genius. They all know how to read, and the greatest part of them take the Gazette, printed in their village, which they often dignify with the name of *town* or *city*. I do not remember ever to have entered a single house, without seeing a huge family bible, out of which they read on evenings and Sundays to their household. They are of a cold, slow and indolent disposition, and averse to labour; the soil, with a moderate tillage, supplying them with considerably more than they can consume: they go and return from their fields on horseback, and in all this country you will scarcely see a traveller on foot: the mildness of their

character is as much owing to climate as to their customs and manners, for you find the same softness of disposition even in the animals of the country. The horses are of excellent breed, and it is common for them to go long journeys at the rate of fifty or sixty miles a-day : they are very teachable, and it is a rare thing to find any of them stubborn or skittish ; the dog is here of a fawning, timid nature, and the strangest figure of a man need not fear any violence from him. I have observed, too, by the way, that his voice is rather broken and hoarse, as well as that of the cock.

The Americans of these parts are very hospitable ; . . . There is such a confidence in the public virtue that, from Boston to Providence, I have often met young women travelling alone on horseback ; or in small riding chairs, through the woods, even when the day was far upon the decline.

. . . . .  
These American husbandmen, more simple in their manners than our peasants, have also less of their roughness, and rusticity ; more enlightened, they have neither their low cunning nor dissimulation ; farther removed from luxurious arts, and less laborious, they are not so much attached to ancient usages, but are far more dexterous in inventing and perfecting whatever tends to the conveniency and comfort of life.

. . . . .  
The whole country, from Boston to Providence, is level ; and I have in this extent met with brooks, which we would call rivers ; their beds, in those places where I passed, looked as if they had been hollowed out of a soil of soft and spongy stone, of a grey and red complexion.

## 1772. Prince de Broglie.

Claude Victor Marie, Prince de Broglie (1757–1794), a French soldier and volunteer in the War for American Independence, came to this country in 1782, in the frigate which brought two million five hundred thousand *livres* for Congress. After his return he joined the French Revolutionary army, and lost his life, finally, during the Reign of Terror.

The following extract is taken from the "Narrative of the Prince de Broglie," translated by E. W. Balch, from an unpublished MS., and published in the *Magazine of American History*, I. 375.

The day's journey from New London to Newport is heavy work. It is about fifty-five miles of bad road, besides which there are two ferries to pass. The first is of no consequence.

The second, called Conanicut Ferry, separates the mainland from the island of Newport. It is a good league wide and not always safe. We arrived there at night. The business of embarking the horses, and the anxiety of fear of some of the passengers as the bark rolled to and fro, was not at all amusing, especially at night. We passed about an hour in this critical fashion, and at last the "pilot" finished by striking a sand bank about two hundred steps from the place where we should have landed. All the passengers, masters and servants were compelled to work so as to disengage us. We jumped into the water where it was about two feet deep, and thus it was that we made our entrance into Newport; that charming place, regret-

ted by the whole army, for that is the way in which everybody speaks of it.

As my companions and myself entered this town with all these agreeable impressions, we immediately set ourselves to work to make acquaintance with its society.

That same evening M. Vauban introduced us at the house of Mr. Champlain, well enough known to us for his wealth, but much more known in the army for the lovely face of his daughter. She was not in the drawing-room at the moment of our arrival, but she appeared an instant after. It is useless to say that we examined her with attention, which was to treat her handsomely, for the result of our observation was to find that she had beautiful eyes and an agreeable mouth, a lovely face, a fine figure, a pretty foot, and the general effect altogether attractive. She added to all these advantages that of being dressed and coiffée with taste, that is to say in the french fashion, besides which she spoke and understood our language.

We rendered to her charms the tribute of admiration and polite civility due to them, and then we hastened off for the purpose of saying just about the same thing concerning the Misses Hunter, who were her rivals in beauty and in reputation.

The elder, without being regularly handsome, had what one might call a noble appearance and an air of aristocratic birth. Her physiognomy is intellectual and refined. There was grace in all her movements. Her toilette was quite as finished as that of Mademoiselle Champlain, but she is not altogether as fresh, in spite of what Fersen said.

The younger sister, Nancy Hunter, is not quite so stylish looking, but she is a perfect rosebud. Her character is gay, a smile always upon her countenance, with lovely teeth, a thing seldom met with in America.

Enchanted with these first specimens of Newport, we

returned home at an early hour. Vauban promised us something even better for the next day, and he kept his word. Without saying where he was conducting us, he took us to a house where an old gentleman, very serious, very silent, received us without taking off his hat, bade us sit down without compliments, and only answered in monosyllables to the observations which we addressed to him.

This first interview seemed to us very queer, and we began to suspect that we must be in the house of a Quaker. Just then the door open [ed], and in came the very goddess of grace and beauty. It was Minerva herself, who had exchanged her warlike vestments for the charms of a simple shepherdess. She was the daughter of a Shaking Quaker. Her name was Polly Lawton. According to the custom of her sect, when she spoke to us she used "thou," but with a grace and simplicity only to be compared to that of her costume. This was a species of English gown, pretty close to the figure, white as milk, an apron of the same whiteness, a fichu very full and firmly fastened. Her headdress was a simple little cap of very fine muslin, plaited and passed around the head, which allowed only half an inch of hair to be visible, but which had the effect of giving to Polly the air of a Holy Virgin.

She seemed to be in no respect conscious of her charms. She spoke with ease, and "thoued" like the Quakers the most unaffected and polite remarks. She enchanted all of us, which she discovered, and did not appear dissatisfied at pleasing those that she kindly called her friends.

I acknowledge that this attractive Polly appeared to me the most exquisite work of Nature, and that every time her image occurs to me I am tempted to write a big book against the dressing, the theatrical graces, and the coquetishness of certain rich ladies much admired in the world of fashion.

Polly had a sister dressed like herself, and of a very agreeable appearance, but one had not the time to look at her while her elder sister was present.

Miss Brinley, Miss Sylvan and some other ladies to whom I was introduced after having quitted the lovely Quakeress, convinced me that Newport possessed more than one rosebud.

All these young people appeared to regret very much the absence of our army. They declared that since the French had left there had been no more amusements nor conversation parties. This little complaint decided de Ségur, de Vauban and myself, and some other young gentlemen of our army, to give a ball to these disconsolate fair ones. M. de Soteux took charge of the preparations.

We met neither reluctance nor refusals when we spoke of dancing. Our company was composed of some twenty young ladies, some of them married, all beautifully dressed, and all appearing to be pleased. We toasted very gaily at supper, and everything passed off satisfactorily.

The second day after this little entertainment we left, so as to rejoin the army at Providence. We quitted Newport with great regret, but not without first having kissed the hand of Polly Lawton.

I do not mention the military works which the French army constructed around Newport, nor the defense of the harbour, because I have treated those matters very carefully in another place.

To go from Newport to Providence one has to pass two ferries; the first, called Tyverton, is sufficiently formidable and rather dangerous in heavy winds. The other, Bristol, is about a quarter of a league broad. Except the ferries the road is very agreeable. The distance from Newport to Providence is about thirty miles.



Providence is situated in a forest, and the river Pawtucket or Narankas, which passes through it, is wide and navigable. It seems to have about eighteen hundred or two thousand inhabitants, amongst whom are some quite rich men, who have extensive commercial transactions.

The army was encamped on the road to Boston about a league from Providence, in some fields which it had occupied the preceding year. The weather became exceedingly rough and the troops suffered a great deal from the almost continual rain and snow.

M. de Rochambeau, much vexed with the perpetual delays of the fleet, nevertheless behaved at Providence like a thoroughly good French General; that is to say, in order to divert his army and gratify the ladies of the city, he gave some balls in a handsome and large public apartment intended for such purposes.

It was at the first of these balls that I saw for the first time the Misses Brown, sisters of the Governor of the city. I do not give their portraits here because I do not want to turn all the men crazy and render all the women jealous. I will content myself merely by saying that Clarice is awkward in comparison with the elder of the two, Nancy Brown; and that Betsy, the youngest sister, after a most agreeable conversation, one which showed that she had been well educated, appeared greatly surprised when she was told that amongst her many advantages not the least of them was that of having great black eyes with eye lashes so long as to half hide them, a thing both rare and lovely. She naively acknowledged that she had never imagined that this was a beauty, and it is quite certain that it was for her a discovery.



## 1782. Count Mathieu Dumas.

Dumas (1753–1837), was another of Rochambeau's aids, and one who seems to have borne a moderately conspicuous part in the siege of Yorktown. Dumas held the position of chief-of-staff after Rochambeau's departure, and, later, travelled quite extensively through this country and South America.

He became an *émigré* at the time of the French Revolution, served under Napoleon, and helped to bring about the Revolution of 1830. The quotation given is taken from the English translation of his *Memoirs of his Own Time*, I. 71.

The little State of Rhode Island, animated by the example of the Bostonians, and encouraged by their success, displayed much energy from the beginning. The enemy took possession of the capital, ravaged the coasts, intercepted its maritime communications, and ruined its commerce. Several weak citizens, attracted by the advantages of prohibited commerce, abandoned the cause. The Quakers, indifferent in appearance, but English in their hearts, inclined to the king's party. The state, however, was neither subdued by the arms of the enemy nor shaken by these intestine quarrels: in the end the Whigs persecuted and expelled, or reduced to silence the Tories who were among them. In consequence of the small extent of this state, all the inhabitants are acquainted with each other. The dense population, the love of agriculture, the active navigation, the continual jobbing, have excited among them the spirit of association, and we observe among them,

more than in any other state, a propensity to political controversy. In fine, the new republicans have nowhere been more haughty, more intolerant, more ardent in the defence of the national cause; and though they have been reduced by great losses to sacrifice every thing, they are not less jealous in supporting the authority of Congress, than in vigourously defending the privileges of their own assemblies; thus but a short time ago, they formally refused to pay a duty of five per cent. on imported goods, to which the other states had already submitted.

### 1773. Samuel Davis.

Samuel Davis (1765–1829), the author of the *Journal* whence the following extract is taken, seems to have been blessed with a peaceful and uneventful life. He was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and died unmarried. His epitaph is pronounced a just epitome of his life and character. It is as follows :

“From life on earth our pensive friend retires,  
His dust commingling with his pilgrim sires.  
In thoughtful walk their every path he traced,  
Their toils, their tombs, their faithful page embraced :  
Peaceful and pure and innocent as they,  
Like them to rise to everlasting day.”

The quotation given below is taken from the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 1869  
70, pp. 28, 29.

## SCITUATE, R. I.

Manchester's; thirteen miles from Voluntown. Enter this State at Coventry, near a log bridge, three miles from Voluntown. Also pass through a part of Foster, a new township. The militia of Scituate were paraded on the border of a grove, into which they fired by platoons. The reverberation of the sound was like cannon, which I supposed it to be. All the matrons and children of the country were assembled in their best attire. This part of the State is thinly inhabited, and the buildings are ordinary. A Baptist meeting-house in Coventry, and another in this place, are without glass or doors. There is something savage and wild in the appearance of everything in these back towns. The road from Hartford to Providence is in a direction nearly east and west. From Bolton, fifty miles hence, it is a continuous tract of ridges of very high ground. These ridges pervade the country, while the rivers and streams, in various directions, find a passage to the Sound, or Narragansett Bay. Dine at Scituate. A dispute or argument occurred here between a Connecticut man and a Rhode Islander, on the moral and religious character of their respective States. The latter observed, that "there may be more religion in Connecticut, but there was more honest men in Rhode Island"!

## PROVIDENCE.

Dexter's; twelve miles from Scituate. Arrived here this afternoon. The last stage the road bounds Johnson on the north, and Cranston on the south, except the last four miles, being in Johnson. Pawtuxet River rises in Scituate, Coventry, and Foster, and falls into Narragansett Bay below Providence. The elegant spire of the Baptist meeting house, in Providence,

is conspicuous many miles. The soil is light and sandy in the western suburbs of Providence. Lodge at this place.

*September 25.*—Visit the stone-ware manufactory. The apparatus for moulding it is simple. Two wooden wheels, placed horizontally, and a few wooden tools, in the manner of a pottery, are all. The ware was annealing in a kiln, in which Lisbon salt was occasionally thrown. Two ranges of holes are on the top; I suppose for this purpose. The clay is procured from New Jersey. Leave this place in the forenoon, by the lower ferry on Seaconk River, to Rehoboth, in Massachusetts. The river is here seventy rods wide. The channel is crooked, but very deep here, perhaps twenty-five feet. Pawtucket Falls are three or four miles above. The general name of the river is Narraganset. It rises in Worcester County, Massachusetts. Ships of great burden, 800 tons, and more, are built at Providence, thirty miles from the ocean.

1787. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur.

A native of Normandy, Hector St. John (1731–1809 ?) came to America in 1754, and settled on a farm in New York, where he lived until the turmoil of the Revolution broke up his home and drove him back to Europe. He introduced the cultivation of the potato into Normandy. His publications upon America were so enthusiastically laudatory that many French families were induced to settle on the Ohio, where the greater part of them perished. The quotation given

is from the third and complete edition of his *Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain*, Paris, 1787, II. 54–59.

Cette Province [*la Colonie de l'Isle de Rhodes & des Plantations de Providence*, en y comprenant le district de *Narragansets*], quoique la plus petite de toutes, jouit de grands avantages.—Le havre de New-Port est un des meilleurs de l'Amérique à tous égards : les terres de cette Colonie produisent de l'herbe excellente et des bestiaux de la plus grande taille, du lin, du maïs, du seigle, des moutons. *Narragansets* est le meilleur Canton de toute l'Amérique pour les chevaux d'allure. Le commodité que procure à cette Colonie la grande Baie qui en forme le centre, a donné à ses Habitans un goût & une aptitude singulière pour les affaires maritimes ; de tous les tems ils ont été les plus habiles Navigateurs : n'ayant que peu d'objets d'exportation, ils arment leurs vaisseaux pour le compte des étrangers ; ils entendent parfaitement toutes les ressources du cabotage & celles du commerce de speculation.

Le Gouvernement est une démocratie parfaite ; le peuple choisit annuellement son Gouverneur & ses Magistrats.—Cette Ile a quatorze milles de long sur quatre de large ; les chemins dont elle est entre-coupée, sont plantés des deux côtés d'acacias & de platanes.—La Nature a placé sur la cime de cette Ile charmante, des fontaines d'où découlent les ruisseaux les plus utiles ; partout on y voit les champs couverts de moissons, & des prairies couvertes de l'herbage le plus abondant ; les maisons y sont singulièrement propres & commodes. *Providence* leur fournit de la chaux excellente, & leur Isle une espèce de sable dont ils enduisent les dehors de leurs maisons : cette incrustation, à laquelle ils donnent l'apparence de la pierre, préserve les bois qui en sont revêtus de toutes les attaques des vents, des

pluies & des gelées ; rien ne m'a paru plus léger, plus propre, plus elegant & plus durable.—Dans aucune autre Colonie, on ne voit point de boeufs d'une si prodigieuse grandeur, ni de troupeaux de moutons si nombreux.

C'est le pays le plus sain que je connoisse ; aussi *New-Port* est-il devenu le rendez-vous de tous les infirmes Anglois, Hollandois & François des Isles occidentales. — Ne pourroit-on pas appeler cette charmante Isle le *Montpellier de l'Amérique* ? Les chaleurs de l'été y sont régulièrement tempérées par les brises de mer, & les rigueurs de l'hiver, considérablement diminuées par le voisinage de l'Océan. La tête de cette Isle, du côté de la mer, offre un singulier mélange de rochers pittoresques & de petits champs fertiles, de sterilité & d'abondance, de sables & de riches sols, de baies douces & commodés, de promontoires escarpés. C'est ici la partie de l'Isle qui inspira à l'Evêque Berkley le désir d'y bâtir un Collège : on y peut, pour ainsi dire, cultiver la terre avec une main & pêcher avec l'autre ; jamais rivages n'ont été plus abondans en poissons de toutes espèces, sur-tout en *Tewtags* (blackfish). L'Isle de *Kananicut* unit à l'excellence de son pâturage, la fertilité du sol labourable, la facilité des pêches, la beauté de la situation, & la plus grande salubrité de l'air. Je désirerois pouvois finir mes jours sur l'une ou l'autre de ces deux Isles. Toute cette Baie en est parsemée, & aucune n'est stérile.— Ici on voit le plus beau sang de l'Amérique : la beauté des filles, l'hospitalité des habitans, la douceur de leur société, la simplicité de leur amusemens, y ont toujours prolongé mon séjour, & m'y ont fait passer les momens les plus heureux.

L'esprit démocratique du Gouvernement, ainsi que celui du commerce, auquel ils sont si adonnés, a beaucoup influé sur leurs moeurs.—Ils sont actifs & remuans, toujours occupés de quelques spéculations maritimes ;



ils sont fins & rusés : leurs Loix, quoique fondées sur l'équité, ne procurent pas toujours à un étranger les prompts secours qu'elles promettent : c'est peut-être un vice dans leurs constitutions que le peuple ait le droit de nommer ses Juges.—Comme leurs principales richesses viennent du commerce, & d'une foule de spéculations d'importation & d'exportation, ils ont besoin, plus encore que les autres Colonies, de la liberté la plus ample : c'est pourquoi ils se sont toujours opposés aux réglemens commerciaux de l'Angleterre, & avec la plus grande animosité.—Les plus foibles entraves renverseroient leurs fortunes & leur existence, qui n'est fondée que sur la liberté du commerce la plus illimitée.

Toutes les Sectes sont venues s'établir ici : les Anabaptistes, les Quakers, les Anglicans, les Calvinistes & les Juifs, dont il y en a un très-grand nombre ; ces derniers ont fait bâtir une magnifique Synagogue, où ils y adorent l'Être Suprême dans l'antique langage d'Abraham, & avec les anciens Rits de Moïse.

Tous les ans on arme ici un très-grand nombre de vaisseaux pour la pêche de la baleine ; ils sont aussi entreprenans, aussi hardis, aussi habiles que les Habitans de *Nantucket* dans ces expéditions.—On fabrique à *New-Port* des chandelles de *spermacetty*, plus blanches & plus belles que celles de cire ; elles ne donnent aucune odeur ni aucune fumée.—Dans les opérations nécessaires, & pour donner la consistance à la matière dont ces chandelles sont faites, ils ont trouvé l'art d'extraire une huile limpide, appelée aussi *huile de spermacetty*, qui est très-utile pour les lampes des Studieux.

La Ville de Providence, au fond de la Baie, est fameuse pour la construction des vaisseaux & la grande quantité de chaux qu'on y manufacture ; ils en exportent dans presque toutes les Villes du Continent.—Cette Province contient, à ce qu'on m'a assuré, 59678 habitans.—L'importance de cette petite Colonie con-

siste moins dans les productions de son crû, que dans l'activité, les conoissances & l'esprit entreprenant des Colons, & dans la situation avantageuse pour le commerce.

### 1787. Rev. Dr. Manasseh Cutler.

Dr. Cutler (1742-1823), a Yale graduate of the class of 1765, studied theology, and became pastor of the church at Ipswich Hamlet, Massachusetts, in 1771. He was distinguished for his scholarship in astronomy, meteorology, and botany, and especially for the part he had, as agent of the Ohio Company, in persuading the Continental Congress to pass the famous Ordinance for the Government of the Northwest Territory. The quotation from his diary here given is taken from the *Life, Journals and Correspondence of the Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, by William P. and Julia P. Cutler, Cincinnati, 1888, I. 324.

We arrived at Newport before daylight set in. The passage not very agreeable, as we were obliged to beat all the afternoon, and considerable sea. I took lodgings at Mr. Benj. Olney's, a very good lodging-house, the genteelst in the place.

*Mon., Oct. 15.* The wind against us. Waited on Miss Polly Stiles, at Mrs. Channing's. Rev. Mr. Channing, a young clergyman, son of Mrs. Channing, and now settled at New London, walked with me over the town of Newport. We went up the steeple of the Episcopal Church, and had a fine view of the town,

which is laid out in regular form ; the buildings old and out of repair, but very few houses that make any tolerable appearance. One street in front of the town is straight and about a mile in length, and makes a tolerable appearance.

There are two Congregational Churches, one Episcopal, three Baptist, and one Jewish Synagogue, which we visited. I was much gratified with a view of the Synagogue. The reading-desk, the altar and ark of the Covenant, the five books of Moses in parchments, rolled and covered with silk, the garments with the fringes which all the people wear, and the phylacteries, are curious and new. Judah was the name of the Jew that attended us. Drank tea at Mrs. Channing's, in company with Governor Bowen and lady, Mr. Gibbs, a principal merchant of this town, and several other gentlemen, and a brilliant circle of ladies.

*Tues., Oct. 16.* Spent the day in listing my money for Congress. Governor Bowen, Mr. Channing, and brother called on me and spent part of the evening. Mr. Atkinson and I took a walk to see Malbone's Gardens. The house was burnt a number of years ago, but the garden remains in tolerable order.

## 1788. J. P. Brissot de Warville.

Brissot (1754–1793) played a prominent part in the early French Revolution as leader of the Girondists. After the defeat of his party, he was thrown into prison and guillotined. His eloquence and literary ability gave him great influence in French politics. In 1788 he visited America to inquire into the condition of the

negroes. While here he became interested in the Scioto Company, and wrote the *Commerce of America with Europe*, to further the enterprise. The quotation given here is from his *New Travels* (ed. 1792), p. 143, *et seq.*

On the 12th of October, we set out from Boston at half past seven in the morning, and arrived by six in the evening at Providence. It is forty-nine miles ; the road good, the soil stoney, gravelly and sandy, and, as usual for such a soil, covered with pines. The country bordering the road, appears neither fertile nor well peopled : you may see houses in decay, and children covered with rags. They had, however, good health, and good complexions. The silence which reigns in the other American towns on Sunday, reigns at Providence even on Monday. Everything here announces the decline of business. Few vessels are to be seen in the port. They were building, however, two distilleries ; as if the manufactories of this poison were not already sufficiently numerous in the United States. Whether it be from prejudice or reality, I seemed to perceive everywhere the silence of death, the effect of paper money. I seemed to see, in every face, the air of a Jew, the result of a traffic founded on fraud and finesse. I seemed to see, likewise, in every countenance, the effects of the contempt which the other States bear to this, and the consciousness of meriting that contempt. The paper-money at this time was at a discount of ten to one.

I went from Providence to Newport in a packet-boat. This journey might be made by land ; but I preferred the water. We arrived in seven hours and a half ; and during two hours we had contrary wind. This distance is thirty miles. We never lost sight of land ; but it offers nothing picturesque or curious.

A few houses, some trees, and a sandy soil, are all that appears to the eye. The port of Newport is considered as one of the best in the United States. The bottom is good, the harbour capable of receiving the largest ships, and seems destined by nature to be of great consequence. This place was one of the principal scenes of the last war. The successive arrival of the American, English, and French armies, left here a considerable quantity of money.\*

Since the peace, everything is changed.† The reign of solitude is only interrupted by groups of idle men, standing with folded arms at the corners of the streets; houses falling to ruin; miserable shops, which present nothing but a few coarse stuffs, or baskets of apples, and other articles of little value; grass growing in the public square, in front of the court of justice; rags stuffed in the windows, or hung upon hideous women and lean unquiet children. . . .

Read again, my friend, the charming description given of this town and this State, by M. de Crèvecoeur. It is not exaggerated. Every American whom I have questioned on this subject, has described to me its ancient splendor, and its natural advantages, whether for commerce, agriculture, or the enjoyments of life.

The State of Rhode-Island will never again see those happy days, till they take from circulation their paper-money, and reform their government. The magistrates should be less dependent on the people than they are at present, and the members of the legislature should not be so often elected. It is inconceivable that so many honest people should groan under the present anarchy; that so many Quakers, who com-

\* The English destroyed all the fine trees of ornament and fruit: they took a pleasure in devastation.

† This town owed a part of its prosperity to the slave trade, which is at present suppressed.

pose the basis of the population of the State, should not combine together to introduce this reform.\*

If this reform is not speedily executed, I doubt not but the State will be unpeopled. A great part of the emigration for the settlement at Muskingum on the Ohio, is from this State. General Varnum is at their head. A number of families are preparing to join them. Nearly all the honest people of Newport would quit the place, if they could sell their effects. I doubt not, likewise, but the example of Rhode-Island will be a proof, in the eyes of many people, that republican government is disastrous. . . . But in the midst of these disorders, you hear nothing of robberies, of murders, or of mendicity; for the American poor does not degrade himself so far as to abjure all ideas of equity, and all shame. . . . The Rhode-Islander does not beg, and he does not steal—the ancient American blood still runs in his veins.

## 1792. Rev. Dr. Jedidiah Morse.

Dr. Morse (1761–1826) was a prominent clergyman of New England, minister at Charlestown, Massachusetts, from 1787 to 1820. He was among the foremost of the founders of the Andover Theological Seminary, and helped to organize the Park Street Church in Boston. He was the first in this country to publish a text-book of geography, and his various works on the subject, some of which were published also in England,

\* The author is happy to find, that before the publication of this letter, this State has acceded to the new federal government. This fact proves, that good principles will predominate at last, and particular abuses will disappear.



Scotland and Ireland, and translated into French and German, gained for him the title of "The Father of American Geography." The quotation given is taken from the *American Geography*, ed. of 1792, pp. 204-209.

*Literature.* The literature of this state is confined principally to the towns of Newport and Providence. There are men of learning and abilities scattered through other towns, but they are rare. The bulk of the inhabitants in other parts of the state, are involved in greater ignorance perhaps than in any other part of New-England.

At Providence, is Rhode-Island college. . . . This institution was founded at Warren, in the county of Bristol, and the first commencement was held there in 1769. . . . In the year 1770, the college was removed to Providence, where a large, elegant building was erected for its accommodation, by the generous donations of individuals, mostly from the town of Providence. It is situated on a hill to the east of the town; and while its elevated situation renders it delightful, by commanding an extensive, variegated prospect, it furnishes it with a pure, salubrious air. The edifice is of brick, four stories high, 150 feet long, and 46 wide, with a projection of ten feet on each side. It has an entry lengthways, with rooms on each side. There are forty-eight rooms for the accommodation of students, and eight larger ones for public uses. The roof is covered with slate.

[The college] is now very flourishing, containing upwards of sixty students. This institution is under

the instruction of a president, a professor of natural and experimental philosophy, a professor of mathematics and astronomy, a professor of natural history, and three tutors. The several classes are instructed in the learned languages, and the various arts and sciences. The studies of the freshman year, are the Latin and Greek languages, English grammar and rhetoric. Of the sophomore, Guthrie's geography, Ward's arithmetic, Hammond's algebra, Sheridan's rhetorical grammar, and lectures on elocution, Watt's logick, and Cicero de Oratore. Of the junior, Horace, Kaim's elements of criticism, Euclid's elements, Atkinson's epitome, Love's surveying, Martin's grammar, Philosophia Britannica, and Ferguson's astronomy. Of the senior, Lucian's dialogues, Locke's essay on the human understanding, Hutchinson's moral philosophy, Bolingbroke on history, and a review of all the studies of the several years. Every year are frequent exercises in speaking, and the various kinds of composition. There are two examinations, several public exhibitions for speaking, and three vacations annually. The institution has a library of between two and three thousand volumes, containing a valuable collection of ancient and modern authors. Also a small, but very valuable philosophical apparatus. Nearly all the funds of the college are at interest in the treasury of the state, and amount to almost two thousand pounds.

Newport contains about 1000 houses, built chiefly of wood, and 5530 inhabitants. It has nine houses for public worship; three for the baptists, two for congregationalists, one for episcopalians, one for Quakers, one for Moravians, and a synagogue for the Jews. The other public buildings are a state-house, and an edifice for the public library. The situation, form, and architecture of the state-house, give it the preference to most public buildings in America. It stands sufficiently ele-

vated, and a long wharf and paved parade lead up to it from the harbour.

The building for the library consists of one large room, thirty-six feet long, twenty-six feet broad, and nineteen feet high, where the books are kept, with two small offices adjoining. The principal or west front is a pediment and portico of four columns, of the Doric order; the whole *entablature* of which, runs quite round the building.

The two offices are placed as wings, one on each side the portico, and connected with the body of the building so as to form two half-pediments proceeding from the lower part of the *entablature*. The east-front consists of a plain Doric pediment, supported by a rustic arcade of three arches, in the recesses of which, are placed three Venetian windows, after the Dorick order.

The outside of the whole building is rustick work, and stands on a base five feet from the ground, and the entrance is by a flight of steps the whole width of the portico.

In the year 1747, Abraham Redwood, Esq; gave 1294 volumes, valued at £500 sterling, as the foundation of a library in Newport. Several other valuable donations were afterwards given. These books were deposited in the above-described edifice, which was erected for the purpose of receiving them.

A number of gentlemen were incorporated into a body politic by the name of the "Company of the Redwood Library," with power to choose annually eight directors, a treasurer, secretary and librarian. This elegant building is now much out of repair, and one-third of the books in the library were either carried off, or destroyed by the British during the war.

## 1793. Rev. Dr. James Freeman.

Dr. Freeman (1759–1835) was a famous Unitarian clergyman. He went to Boston in 1782, and became a lay-reader in King's Chapel. He became a Unitarian, and, in 1785, induced the church to alter its liturgy so as to conform to the views of the Unitarian theology. As a consequence of his heresy, the bishops refused to ordain him, whereupon, in 1787, the wardens and congregation ordained him in "a solemn and appropriate form," as "Rector, Minister, Priest, Pastor, teaching Elder, and public Teacher" of the Society. Thus the first Episcopalian church in New England became the first Unitarian church in this country, and was for many years the only Unitarian society of any importance. The quotation here given is taken from a criticism of Dr. Morse's *Geography* (see the preceding extract) entitled *Remarks on the American Universal Geography*, p. 40. Boston, 1793.\*—Under Rhode Island the author takes exception to the commonly received opinions respecting the religious zeal and the average intelligence of the people.

Mr. M. does not appear to be pleased with the state of religion of Rhode Island. . . . I assert . . . that there are a few only of the people of this state,

\*The copy preserved in the John Carter Brown Library, presumably Dr. Morse's copy, contains a slip pasted on the fly-leaf bearing the words, in Dr. Morse's handwriting, "Dependence is not to be placed on all the corrections in this pamphlet—a number of them, however, are worthy of notice."—J. MORSE.

who do not class themselves with some religious sect ; and that in few of the towns, publick worship is neglected by the greater part of the inhabitants. In this neglect Rhode Island is not peculiar ; for there are some towns in Massachusetts (to say nothing of other states) in which a majority of the people do not attend publick worship. . . . The fact is that the religious societies are numerous, in proportion to the population ; there being above eighty of various denominations. Of these, not more than eighteen are destitute of ministers. There are, in proportion, as many vacant churches in Massachusetts.

. . . . .

The literature of the state is not confined to Newport and Providence ; and though there may not be as many men of learning, as in the two adjoining states, yet the inhabitants are not involved in greater ignorance, than the inhabitants of many other parts of New England.

### 1794. Governor John Drayton.

John Drayton (1766–1822) was a lawyer of Charleston, South Carolina. He was elected lieutenant-governor of that state in 1798, and in 1800 succeeded Governor Rutledge, who died in office. He also held the same position at two subsequent periods of his career. The quotation given is taken from his *Letters written during a Tour through the Northern and Eastern States*, pp. 40 *et seq.*

After a sail of twenty-six hours, we arrived at the town of Newport : situated on an island in Narragan-

sett Bay ; and having before it a quiet and deep harbour, quite protected from the winds by a small island which is before the town ; upon which there has been a large fort, for its protection. At present, nothing gives it a military appearance, but the flag ; the fort, having been entirely dismantled.

The town, is said to contain about seven thousand inhabitants. And I am afraid, is rather in decline, than in prosperity. The wrath of kings, fell upon it during the American war ; and it felt so severely the scourge of their armies and fleets ; that it will be long ere it shall recover its former prosperity. Besides, it has a more serious difficulty to contend with in being rivalled of its commerce by the town of Providence ; situated about ten leagues farther up the country.

The inhabitants have lately fitted up a room in the form of a theatre, capable of containing about two hundred persons ; much in the style of what *Harmony-hall* was with us. They have a rope-dancer attached to the company, by the name of Placide. I saw him and his wife, who is a handsome woman, about twenty-two years of age, dance an *allemande* upon the stage ; in which, their bodies were thrown into a variety of positions.

At this place, is a library house ; I wish I could say a library. But that alas ! has been taken away, by the pilfering hand of the British. Who in this, as well as in other instances, carried on war not only against men, but against learning.

I took a ride through the extent of the island, which is twelve miles long. It is parcelled out every way into small farms, which are divided, and laid out in all directions, by stone walls. There is not much variety in the scene. The eye, is thrown around for trees ; but in vain. The zephyrs, have no foliage here, upon which they may dance. For the troops of Britain,



like the locusts of Afric, have withered each tree upon this once happy island : and when they departed, left the inhabitants no shrubs, under whose shade, they might rest themselves in peace. But their industry begins to raise up some trees, to defend them from the summer sun : though at great expence, as they have them all to buy.

After staying at Newport two days, I took my passage on board of a packet for Providence : where, I arrived in three hours and a half. And never in a worse time for observations as a traveller ; it being insufferably hot ; and the situation of the town rather encreasing it, than otherwise. It is situated on each shore of a narrow river, along the side of the hills down to the waters edge. Where, the summer breezes may blow over it in vain : serving only to tantalize the citizens, with what they cannot enjoy. It is however a flourishing town, and is the present seat of government ; having a baptist church with one of the tallest and handsomest steeples in America. It is said to be two hundred and twenty feet high. The church is built of wood, and is elegantly finished in the inside : being illuminated at night by a superb glass chandelier. The church has been lately repaired and painted at the expence of a Miss B——n ; whose fortune furnished her with the means, while her inclination prompted her here to return a portion of those riches, which heaven had given her. And sweet must her feelings be, when she reflects on this good appropriation of what is of no value, but as it assists the pleasures of an honest and well-spent life.

Each part of the town, is connected by a bridge thrown across the river, the whole width of the street. There are foot ways on each side of it, in which three persons may walk abreast : and the carriage way is wide enough for as many carriages to pass at one time. At night it is illuminated by three lamps on each side.

Upon an eminence within the town, and overlooking it, is an handsome and commodious brick college; where at present numbers of youth are educated. I had not time to go into it, or opportunities of making any particular enquiries respecting it.

The town is said to contain six thousand inhabitants: four thousand less than Charleston. And yet it sends three or four ships to India in each year! would to heaven, that we were as much advanced in commerce. In comparison with the trading towns of the northern and eastern states, pardon the expression when I say, those of the southern are but in leading strings.

### 1795. "Citoyen adoptif."

This quotation is taken from an anonymous work entitled *Response aux Principales Questions qui peuvent être faites sur les Etats-Unis de l'Amérique*, Par un citoyen adoptif de la Pennsylvanie. Lausanne, 1795. Vol. I., p. 292.

#### Rhodeisland.

Il est reconnu, par le denombrement de 1791, qu'il y a,

En hommes libres, au dessus de seize ans—	16019
En garçons, au dessous de seize ans—	15799
En femmes & filles libres, de tout âge—	32652
En autres personnes libres	3407
En esclaves	948
Total	68825

Ce nombre donne vingt-cinq habitans par mille quarré, & chaque habitant a vingt-cinq acres and demi. . . .

L'État comprend plusieurs îles dans son étendue, dont la principale est *Rhodeisland*. Le climat de cette île est serein et agréable ; Les femmes y sont si belles, que les voyageurs s'accordent à l'appeler l'Eden de l'Amérique. Ce petit Archipel procure à l'État l'avantage de six ports, qui sont : *Newport, Providence, Wickford, Patuxet, Warren & Bristol*. . . .

*Newport* est renommé pour les bourgies de *Spermaceti* : outre leur blancheur, qui les rend plus agréables à la vue que la cire, elles ont l'avantage de ne donner ni fumée, ni odeur désagréable.

*Providence* est encore une grand ville, dans l'État de *Rhodeisland* : elle contient environ quatre mille habitans ; mais ce qui le distingue sur-tout, ce sont les manufactures de drap, dont elle a un prodigieux débit.

■

## 1795. Rev. John Pierce.

John Pierce (1773–1859) was a Unitarian clergyman, for fifty years pastor of the Brookline Church. He was one of the institutions, not to say traditions, of Harvard. He was present at sixty-three commencements and for fifty-four years led the singing of the tune of "St. Martin's" at the commencement dinner. His memoirs were left to the Massachusetts Historical Society. The quotation here given is taken from his manuscript journal as published in the Society's *Proceedings*, 2d Series, III. 41–43.

Wednesday, 2 September, notwithstanding the rain, we proceeded to Providence, and stopped at Tyler's Hotel, near the Baptist Meetinghouse.

At X, we attended the Commencement Exercises in this House. President Maxcy presided. Dr. Stillman, of Boston, offered the concluding prayer.

In the morning the audience was small.

P. M. the assembly was larger. Twenty-six were graduated. the compositions of the students were exceedingly florid. No figures were too bold to be used. The students were much dressed. The speaking was very declamatory. We dined with the College Officers and invited guests in the College Hall. The President asked the blessing. Dr. Hopkins, of Newport, Author of the Hopkinsian system, returned thanks. He was then 74 years of age. He looked, as if he were 100. President Maxcy, at the close of the Exercises, made a solemn address to the Graduates. I saw Classmates Angier and Avery, & Professor, afterwards President Webber.

I spent the evening at the room of Mr. Wiswell, one of the graduates, in sacred music.

*Thursday, 3 September* visited various parts of the Town of Providence. An elegant Meeting house, with two Towers, after the Model of the Church, in Hollis Street, Boston, was lately erected, in which Dr. Hitchcock preaches.

I viewed the improvements of Mr. Brown. He has removed a Hill of about 83 feet in height into low land, to make a wharf, &c. He has a large Distillery, and fattens cattle from the remains of the grains, which have undergone the process of fermentation. He owns a large Wharf, at which lay an Indiaman of between 6 & 700 Tons.

P. M. we visited the Cemetery, two or three miles from the centre of the Town. It contains handsome

Monuments, decent gravestones, and some elegant Epitaphs.

At V, P. M., we passed through Johnston, and arrived at Fish's, Scituate, where we spent the night.

Providence stands at the junction of Providence & Taunton rivers, and has the advantage over Newport by the superiority of its market. The buildings in general are indifferent, though some are elegant. The Baptist Church is one of the most elegant and spacious in the United States. It was built by *blank* Sumner, father of Thomas W. Sumner, who has been an Architect. The College is a convenient brick edifice, commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country. They have a Theatre nearly finished.

## 1795. William Winterbotham.

Winterbotham was a native of London, and assistant minister of a Baptist congregation in Plymouth, England. On account of two sermons preached there, in which he commended the French Revolution and advocated a reform of the British Parliament, he was tried for sedition in 1793, and sentenced to pay fines amounting to £200, and to undergo four years' imprisonment. His work upon the United States, in four volumes, was written in Newgate Prison, "with the Assistance of Persons who have resided in and who are in the constant Habit of extensive Correspondence with the different States."

The extract given is taken from *An Historical, Geographical, Commercial, and Philosophical View of the American United States*, Vol. II., p. 226. London, 1795.

## General Description of Rhode-Island.

## Soil, Productions, etc.

A country for pasture, and not for grain. . . . It however produces corn, rye, barley, oats, and in some parts wheat sufficient for home consumption; and the various kinds of grasses, fruits, culinary roots and plants in great abundance, . . . and cyder is made for exportation. . . . The tract of country lying between South-Kingston and the Connecticut line, called the Narraganset country, is excellent grazing land, and is inhabited by a number of wealthy farmers, who raise some of the finest neat cattle in New-England, weighing from sixteen to eighteen hundred weight. They keep large dairies, and make both butter and cheese of the best quality and in very large quantities for exportation. Narraganset has been famed for an excellent breed of pacing horses, remarkable for their speed and hardiness, and for enduring the fatigues of a journey; this breed of horses has, however, much depreciated of late, the best mares having been purchased by the people from the westward. The bowels of the earth in this State offer a large recompense to the industrious adventurer. Iron ore is found in great plenty in several parts of the State. The iron works on Patuxet river, twelve miles from Providence, are supplied with ore from a bed four miles and a half distant, which lies in a valley, through which runs a brook. . . .

At Diamond-Hill, in the county of Providence, which is so called from its sparkling and shining appearance, there are a variety of peculiar stones, more curious than at present they appear to be useful; but not far from this hill, in the township of Cumberland, is a copper mine, mixed with iron strongly impregnated with loadstone. . . .

There are several mineral springs in this State, to one of which, near Providence, many people resort to bathe



and drink the water. . . . Rhode-Island is considered by travellers as the best fish market, not only in the United States, but in the world.

. . . . .  
NEWPORT. . . .

The excellent accommodations and regulations of the numerous packets which belong to this port, and which ply thence to Providence and New-York, ought not to pass unnoticed; they are said to be superior to any thing of the kind in Europe.

PROVIDENCE. . . .

This town is divided into two parts by the river, and connected by a bridge, formerly called Weybosset, from a high hill of that name which stood near the west end of the bridge, but which is now removed, and its base built upon; this bridge which is the only one of any considerable note in this State, is one hundred and sixty feet long and twenty-two feet wide, supported by two wooden tressels and two stone pillars; its situation affording a prospect of all vessels leaving and entering the harbour, renders it a pleasant place of resort in the summer. Ships of almost any size sail up and down the channel, which is marked out by stakes, erected at points, shoals, and beds lying in the river, so that strangers may come up to the town without a pilot.

A ship of 950 tons, for the East-India trade, was lately built in this town, and fitted for sea.

. . . . .  
The public buildings, an elegant meeting-house for the Baptists, eighty feet square, with a lofty and beautiful steeple and a large bell, cast at the Furnace Hope in Scituate—a meeting-house for Friends or Quakers, two for Congregationalists, an episcopal church, a handsome court-house, seventy-feet by forty, in which is deposited a library for the use of the inhabitants of

the town and country—a work-house, a market-house eighty feet long and forty feet wide, and a brick school-house, in which four schools are kept. The houses in this town are generally built of wood, though there are some brick buildings which are large and elegant.

At a convenient distance from the town, an hospital for the small-pox and other diseases has been erected. There are two spermaceti works, a number of distilleries, sugar houses, and other manufactures.

. . . . .

About four miles north-east of Providence lies a small village called Pautucket, a place of some trade, and famous for lamprey eels. . . .

#### TRADE AND MANUFACTURES

Before the war, the merchants in Rhode-Island imported from Great-Britain dry goods; from Africa slaves; from the West-Indies sugars, coffees, and molasses, and from the neighbouring colonies lumber and provisions. . . . But the war, and some other events, have had a great, and in many respects, an injurious effect upon the trade of this State. The slave trade, which was a source of wealth to many of the people in Newport, and in other parts of the State, has happily been abolished; . . .

The present exports are flax seed, lumber, horses, cattle, beef, pork, fish, poultry, onions, butter, cheese, barley, grain, spirits, and cotton & linen goods. The imports consist chiefly of European and West-India goods, and logwood from the Bay of Honduras.

Upwards of 600 vessels enter and clear annually at the different ports in this State. . . . A cotton manufactory has been erected at Providence, which, from present prospects, will answer the expectations of the proprietors. The warps are spun by water with a machine, which is an improvement on Mr.

Arkwright's ; and strong, smooth and excellent yarn is thus made both for warps and stockings. . . . Jeans, fustians, denims, thicksets, velvets, &c. are here manufactured and sent to the southern States. . . . But the most considerable manufactures in this State are those of iron, such as bar and sheet iron, steel, nail rods and nails, implements of husbandry, stoves, pots, and other household utensils, anchors, bells, &c. The other manufactures of this State are rum, corn spirits, chocolate, paper, wool and cotton, cards, &c.

## 1795. The Duke of La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt.

La Rochefoucauld (1749–1827), was a type of the *grand seigneur* of the old régime. He had travelled and lived in England, and endeavored to manage his estates in France on the model of the English country gentleman. During the Revolution he was proscribed, but contrived to escape to England. In 1792 he came to America, and travelled extensively. He describes his journeys with care and candor, and seems to have managed to extract valuable information from all sorts and conditions of men. He returned to France in 1799, but in spite of opportunities and solicitations, refused to involve himself in political matters.

The extract given here is taken from his *Travels through the United States of North America in 1795, 1796 and 1797*. Vol. II, p. 272, *et seq.* (London, 1800.)

This island [Rhode-Island] exhibits a continued succession of meadows and maize. Barley is likewise produced here in considerable abundance. The breweries of Philadelphia and New York furnish an advantageous market for this last article. Formerly this island was extensively covered with fruit-trees and other wood. But these the English destroyed during the war. The soil is light, sandy, and, in general, unimproved by manure or skilful tillage. The medium produce of the meadows is a ton of hay per acre; the ground under tillage yields, an acre, twenty-five bushels of maize, or one hundred bushels of potatoes. There are instances of greater produce; but these occur only where particular land-holders have cultivated their ground with unusual intelligence and care. . . . The common extent of the farms is seventy acres. Some small number of them contain two hundred acres; and three or four, even four hundred acres.

The farm of *Samuel Elem*, to whom I had a letter from William Rush, is four hundred acres in extent. He is the only farmer in the island who does not personally labour upon his own ground. He is an Englishman, from Yorkshire. He came hither as a merchant before the revolution. The length of his necessary stay gave him a fondness for the country, and inclined him to settle in it. He lives in a snug small house, five miles from Newport, and near to East Passage. Agriculture is the only business that he now follows. He does not boast of having found it, as yet, very profitable. . . . The stone fences enclosing his fields are higher and better than any I have seen in Massachusetts. His meadows are in a state of improvement and fertility, which is considerably profitable. But the difficulty of procuring laborers stands greatly in the way of all agricultural improvements in these parts. Mr. Elem . . . often meets with a contradictory spirit

in his working-people, who are apt to think, that their toil must make them more skilful in husbandry than their idle master.

The cheese of Rhode Island is famous throughout all America ; but the only cheese which these parts now furnish for exportation is from the isles of Conanicut and Block, which make part of this state. . . .

The following reasons are assigned for the poverty of the farmers of Rhode-Island. It is usual for the young people, at the age of thirteen, to leave the family of their parents, and go into the service of others. The parents find it vain to endeavour to detain them ; for, if not permitted to do as others do, they will not work at home. In consequence, other labourers are to be hired ; and that accumulation of stock is materially hindered which might be best produced by the joint labour of a whole family, without hired assistance. Besides, so many are disposed to become farmers for themselves, even without any adequate stock, that labourers are not to be procured for any reasonable hire, even in cases of the most urgent necessity. 2. It is a disadvantage also to the agriculture of this territory, that it is everywhere adjacent to the sea. The young people have, in consequence of this, been long accustomed to prefer a seafaring life to husbandry, because the former affords higher wages in money, and is more grateful to the roving spirit of inexperienced youth. Even the resident farmers are tempted to join the fishing with the toils of husbandry, as the fishing affords, at all times in the year, a very plentiful supply for the nourishment of their families. They, consequently, take little care to improve the soil to its highest pitch of cultivation. The same thing may be said of the inhabitants all along the sea-coast of America. 3. There is a want of a regular and profitable market for

the superfluous produce of the isle. There is, indeed, a market-place in the town of Newport ; but the farmers rarely bring their grain hither for sale ; nor do those who are in want of it resort to this market to supply themselves. The farmers bring flesh, corn, beans, and pease to the town, and there place it in houses for sale. When purchasers do not appear, as is often the case ; the quantity is far from being sufficiently considerable to become an object of commercial speculation for foreign export, to the merchants. 4. There is such an extreme scarcity of wood, that no farmer who is in want of it, can supply himself at a less price than four or five dollars a cord. In consequence of this want of trees, the whole island is too much exposed to the winds, which often blow over it with a very troublesome violence. There has been a remarkable difference in the produce of fruit upon the farms of this isle, ever since the great trees were destroyed by the English during the war. 5. The elections to all places in the government, and to the representative representation, are renewed every six months ; and the frequent journies and public meetings which these occasion, seem to withdraw the attention of these people, in too great a degree, from their husbandry. 6. Lastly, the people of Rhode-Island are singularly illiterate. Scarcely has the whole island a single well-conducted free-school ; such is the opposition of prejudice to every thing of this nature. The public records of the small state of Rhode-Island are in greater disorder than those of any one else ; and this disorder is a primary cause of the ignorance of the inhabitants ; so that all their shortcomings in the respect of knowledge, are plainly to be charged to the misconduct of their rulers. . . . Newport is accounted the chief town of the state of Rhode-Island. It is the most ancient ; the deputies of the state hold their as-



semblies there : but Providence is more populous, and carries on a considerable trade. Before the war, there were in Newport ten thousand inhabitants ; in Providence, not more than one thousand. Providence now contains seven thousand ; Newport, but five thousand inhabitants. Many of the richer inhabitants of Newport have deserted it. A number of families forsaking this town in the time of the revolution, while it was in the possession of the English, retired to Providence, and settling there, have never since been induced to change their residence. Those, on the other hand, who were attached to the cause of England, went away with the English troops, when these were obliged to evacuate the island. Political dissensions, which long distracted Rhode-Island, contributed farther to this desertion of Newport. It is only within these last two or three years, that its trade has begun to revive. It has twelve vessels of some considerable burthen, engaged in the trade to Europe ; two or three of which sail to the coast of Guinea for cargoes of negroes, which they bring for sale to Georgia and the West-India isles ; forty more, which are employed in the coasting-trade, and sail only for the colonies. The coasting-trade is that which the people of this town chiefly prefer. The amount of the exports from Newport was, in 1791, of the value of two hundred and seventeen thousand three hundred and ninety-four dollars ; . . . in 1795, three hundred and seventeen thousand eight hundred and sixty dollars.

Barley is the principal article of agricultural produce, which it furnishes for exportation. . . . [It] is freighted rather on board the ships from Providence, than in those from Newport. The ships from Providence carry it chiefly into the southern states, from which they bring, in return, other cargoes, either to some port in the United States, to Europe, or to the West-India isles.

The houses of Newport are almost all very small, and miserably bad : they are of wood, and not painted. In the town, every thing wears the appearance of decay ; but the harbour has a show of opulence and active commerce. The vicinity of the sea, the spaciousness and security of the road, its easiness of access, and its convenient situation, render it a very commodious shelter for vessels going from the southern parts of the mainland of America, towards the northern, or from the north southwards. It is indeed more frequented than any other port, by foreign ships. Newport, with all these advantages, seems to be naturally destined to become a harbour for ships of war, whenever the United States shall assume the consequence of a Naval Power. . . .

In Rhode-Island there is the same freedom of religious worship and opinions, as in Pennsylvania. Baptists and Quakers are the most prevailing sects ; but the people in general, in this island, are far from being *religious overmuch*. In the whole island, which is fifteen miles long and three miles broad, there is no church, except at Newport ; and to this the country-people do not resort above four times in the year. The people of this state are reputed to be indolent, quarrelsome, and litigious. These faults of character, if justly imputed, are sufficient to account for their poverty. There is said to be a great uncertainty of political opinions in Rhode-Island : they were not unfavourable to the abominable tyranny of Robespierre ; they are far less friendly to France since the guilt of that tyranny has been suppressed, and order restored. Before the war, there were many opulent inhabitants in Rhode-Island ; at present, only the ruins of their houses, and the traces of their former inclosures, remain to be seen. The houses are either desolate, or are inhabited in their least ruinous parts, by people who, on account of the

smallness of their capitals, their dislike to labour, and many other reasons, are much inferior in condition to the people of the other parts of New England.

In the high-church of Newport, there is a monument erected by the order of Louis the sixteenth, to the Chevalier de TERNAY. He was commander of the fleet which conveyed M. ROCHAMBEAU and the French army to America. He died at Newport in the year 1780. The inscription is in a very simple style, and speaks very much in honour of M. de Ternay.

The State of Rhode-Island is very proud of having given birth to General Green, one of the greatest, if not absolutely the greatest, of American generals. He was, by birth, a Quaker, and was a respectable trader in Newport. But, for the sake of liberty, he quickly shook off the prejudices of his sect, and abandoned his business. He went, in the very beginning of the war, to contend against British opposition. In the whole course of this memorable war, there was not a battle, not a skirmish, in which Green did not distinguish himself by signal valour, and extraordinary military talents. His sound and discerning mind rendered often the most important services in the Council. He is, above all, famous for his expedition into the southern states, in the year 1781. . . . he, by a variety of the most skilful stratagems, and plans of annoyance, and by the exertion of extraordinary courage, forced the English to retire gradually from the provinces of Upper Virginia, North Carolina, and almost all South Carolina; . . . He was the ardent friend of liberty, without laying aside, on this account, all respect to natural justice and humanity. His whole life was spent in a continued train of virtuous actions. After these illustrious deeds in the field, he was hailed as the deliverer of the southern states, and received the thanks of the Congress. He died within a few years after the estab-

lishment of American freedom. The Congress erected, at the public expence, a monument in honour of his patriotism, his virtues, and his talents ; and in so doing, gratified the earnest desire of all true-hearted Americans.

. . . . .

Two miles beyond Warren, the road turns to Providence in Massachusetts. The land is there, for several miles, so sandy and boggy, that no stones can be found for fences. On the other hand, wood is so scarce, and so costly, that it can be as little applied to this use as stones. Yet the fields are enclosed with fences, which, to two-thirds of the height, are formed of turfs, with cross-bars of timber above. In other places where stones are not so scarce, the fences are formed one-half of stones, one half of wood.

I know not whether it might be, that the information which I received in Newport, impressed me with unfavourable prejudices against the people of Rhode-Island : but I could not help thinking, that, in the short part of my way which now led through the state of Massachusetts, I received much more obliging answers to my enquiries, than in the district which I had left.

I had . . . no reason to complain of my reception with MOSES BROWN, to whom I had a letter of introduction from William Rush. He lives in a farm not far from the upper bridge over Deacon's River, on the way to Providence. Moses Brown is a very strict Quaker ; became a Quaker upon conviction ; and has been such for the space of forty years. He acquired a considerable fortune in trade, of which he has resigned the greater part to his son ; and he himself now lives in quiet cessation from business, transacting nothing of that sort upon his own account. Notwithstanding the rustic simplicity of his manners, he seemed to be a very

worthy man. He pressed me to stay with him for the evening, telling me, that he did not ask me in the way of empty compliment, but that if he had not desired my company, he would not have given me the invitation. I excused myself, by mentioning, that as I had but very little time to spend at Providence, and as the weather, though generally uncertain, was now fair, I must, therefore, avail myself of the present moment, and proceed on my journey.

The environs of Providence are more interesting than those of Newport: and they give to an approaching traveller, very favourable ideas of the town which he is about to enter. The hill at the foot of which the town lies, and over which you must pass into it, is intersected into two parts by a paved road, which has a slow and gentle descent. The town lies on both sides of the river: a well-constructed bridge affords a ready communication between its two divisions. Lofty, well-built and well-furnished houses, are numerous in this town, which is becoming continually larger: and the prospect of an increase of wealth and populousness, has induced the inhabitants to set apart a considerable extent of the adjacent hill for new buildings. The trade of Providence, as I mentioned above, is four or five times as great as that of Newport. Its exports are partly from this state, and in part from Massachusetts and Connecticut. A distillery, perhaps the greatest in the American States, extensive manufactures of nails and of other forged iron-work, contribute much to the exportation from this place.

In the course of this last year, endeavours have been made to introduce the manufacture of cotton-yarn and stuffs into Providence. The author of this undertaking says, that he finds it already profitable: But I should suspect this to be, rather the boast of sanguine expectation, and of self-conceit, than the actual truth of



the facts. All machines in America are indeed more or less profitable : but the machinery which requires workmen to be employed about it, is by no means to be compared to that of Europe, where a truly good workman gets one-half less than in America, especially in its sea-port towns.

There are some ships from Providence engaged in the accursed traffic of negroes, in contempt of the orders of Congress, by which it has been forbidden. The merchants concerned in this trade persuade themselves, that Congress cannot alter the Constitution ; and therefore think, that in spite of whatever Congress shall order, they may continue the slave-trade till 1808, the year fixed in the Constitution for its final cessation. They allege farther, that every state possesses a right to decide for itself in regard to this traffic ; and that the state of Rhode-Island has not, as yet, made any enactment against it. They therefore purchase negroes, and carry them to sale in Georgia, where there is no prohibition of any sort against the trade. Nearly twenty ships from the harbours of the United States are employed in the importation of negroes to Georgia, and to the West-India isles.

I am surprised, that, while there is so strong and general a disapprobation of this whole trade, and while it is in such direct contradiction to the spirit of freedom, and to the predominant sentiments throughout America, Congress should neglect to interpose, and entirely suppress it here. I was informed, that this is about to happen : But it is likewise to be owned, that the merchants of Rhode-Island carry on the slave-trade in a way less offensive to humanity, than that in which it is conducted by the merchants of Europe. They take but one negro for every ton of the ship ; while the English merchants, it is said, take from one and a half to two negroes a ton. Even in fetters, the



negroes have more room, and suffer less. The ships engaged in this trade are usually not very large; and the negroes, I was assured, commonly arrive at the place of their destination in good health.

There goes but a single vessel from Providence to the whale-fishery. Ill success has occasioned some others, which were formerly employed in the same fishery, to be withdrawn from it. The maritime traffic from Providence is principally that to China, and to Nootka Sound. The augmentation of the number of ships belonging to this port, the increase, and the improved elegance of the buildings, is more the consequence of the growing wealth of the people of the place, than of any new resort of foreigners to settle here.

This small state, situate in the middle of New England, differs much from that state, by peculiarity of customs, usages, and opinions, which, whether good or bad, have necessarily a great influence upon the government. There seems to be a general desire for a change of the constitution of Rhode-Island.

The population of this whole state amounts to about sixty-eight thousand souls. The highest amount of the taxes is twenty-thousand dollars in the year. When it is considered, that the Governor's salary is only six hundred and sixty-six dollars and two-thirds; and that the members of the assembly receive no salary; this moderate sum will not be thought inadequate to the purposes to which it is to be applied. Newport furnishes three thousand nine hundred and sixteen dollars, two-thirds of this sum; and Providence contributes seven thousand one hundred and twenty dollars. The taxes paid by the country are nearly equal to those from the towns. There are but few poor to be maintained by public charity, in it. The Quakers are not much in favour here. They have an austerity in their

appearance, an extravagance in their principles, and an oddity in their state. The roads are repaired by the common labour of the inhabitants. No extraordinary expence is ever applied to the improvement of the roads. The state is so small, that these people give themselves very little concern about highways. In travelling, they call roads good or bad, without farther care. When there is anything of indispensable necessity to be done to them, they then raise a voluntary subscription to accomplish it.

The number of people really opulent in this state is not considerable ; nor is the number much greater of those who affect the appearance of wealth ; for this last is prevented by the democratical spirit of the constitution, and by the tone of public opinion throughout the country. There are, besides, certain taxes imposed, particularly upon those who live in a sumptuous style. There is in Providence a college for the education of youth in the different branches of learning ; but so far is it from being very eminent or in high reputation, that they who wish to give their children a good education, send them to Massachusetts or Connecticut. The funds for the support of this college were bestowed chiefly by Baptists ; in consequence of which it is settled that the president, and the greater part of the other teachers, must belong to that religion ; and they are, therefore, chiefly young persons of the Baptist sect who are educated in it. The Quakers are not much in favour here. They have an austerity in their appearance, an extravagance in their principles, and an oddity in their customs, and even in their dress, which, in my opinion, differ widely and disadvantageously from the amiable simplicity of the character and manners of the Quakers of Philadelphia.

But here, as elsewhere, the Quakers strongly disapprove of slavery, and of the traffic in negroes. On

this account they are looked on with an evil eye by the slave owners ; because the smallness of the state renders it exceedingly easy for the slaves receiving any encouragement to that effect, to make their escape from their masters.

In Providence there are some rich merchants, who expend their wealth by living in a comfortably sumptuous style. Such are Messrs. CLARK and NIGHTINGALE. I had a letter of introduction to them. The former received me very hospitably, and seemed to be a man of sound intelligence, and considerable information. By him I was introduced to an inhabitant of the town, who had lately returned from France. This man spoke strongly against the revolution, and the crimes to which it had given birth. He, at the same time related, that at the Castle of Vincennes, he had obtained an excellent bargain of the property of an emigrant, and named others who had been as great gainers as he, by proscriptions and confiscations ; I know not the gentleman's name ; if I did, I should think it my duty to make it public.

The richest merchant in Providence is JOHN BROWN, brother to Moses Brown, the Quaker above-mentioned. In one part of the town he has accomplished things that, even in Europe, would appear considerable. At his own expence he has opened a passage through a hill to the river, and has there built wharfs, houses, an extensive distillery, and even a bridge, by which the road from Newport to Providence is shortened by at least a mile. He has sold many of his houses. At his wharfs are a number of vessels, which are constantly receiving or discharging cargoes. In his distillery he maintains a great number of oxen, the labour of which is extremely useful, and a great saving of expence to him. I had no letter of introduction to him ; and my stay in Providence was too short to admit of my be-

coming acquainted with him. I exceedingly regretted to find myself obliged to leave the town, without conversing with a man, the extent of whose establishments, and the success of whose trade, evince him to be a person of extraordinary intelligence and enlargement of mind.

At Providence, and throughout the whole state, the produce of the land is nearly the same as in the island. It yields of maize from fifteen to twenty bushels an acre, and of other produce in proportion. There are two churches in Providence, one for Anabaptists, another for Presbyterians. They are distinguished for the neatness and simplicity in their structure and decorations.

The wages to ship-carpenters and other labourers are nearly the same in Newport and Providence, as in New Bedford. But negroes are almost the only servants to be seen.\*

The state of Rhode Island, and particularly the island, have suffered a considerable loss of population by emigration to the newly occupied lands, and in particular to Canada. Fewer in proportion have gone from Massachusetts than from this state. Besides, Massachusetts is receiving a continual influx of new inhabitants. There are banks in both these states. That of Newport is of recent erection. Its notes are generally for one dollar each.

#### NEWPORT.

The Providence packets have generally parcels and letters for Newport. We stopped there from nine at night to nine in the morning. It gave me pleasure to see once more, not this dull low town, but its environs,

\* The rates of wages given for New Bedford are "ordinary labourers at the rate of from eight to nine dollars a month." *Travels*, p. 271.

which form a charming landscape, and are, as well as the whole island, one of the most healthy parts of America. Several families of Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland, come to reside here every year to avoid the dreadful heat and insalubrity of their own country. Newport also unites the advantage of a low price for all the necessaries of life with that of not offering any means, nor holding out any temptation, for expences foreign to the necessities of existence.

The salubrity of the town of Newport is, no doubt, produced by the keenness of the air; yet this often proves hurtful to the inhabitants in their youth, and the number of young people, especially girls, who die of complaints in the lungs, is very considerable. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that the inscription on the tomb-stones mention only childhood, youth, or old age; they record the deaths of few persons between twenty and seventy years old, but a considerable number beyond the latter age.

The town of Providence, though in general healthy, is not however exempt from bilious fevers toward the end of summer and autumn; but these complaints are usually unattended with danger. Consumptions in youthful habits are as common here as at Newport; and many individuals fall victims to them before the age of thirty.

The trade of Providence employs a hundred and forty-two vessels belonging to that port; and very little of it is shared by foreign ships, even by those of the other states. That trade, as I think I remarked last year, consists in the exportation of oxen, live hogs, salt pork, butter and cheese, barley, timber, onions, rum, whiskey, gin, flax-seed, wrought iron, and the commodities imported from the East and West Indies. The greater part of the cheese, however, is consumed in the United States, to which the port of Providence



also sends great quantities of lime-stone, and some iron. . . . The iron is forged within the state, at the falls of Potosky, round which lies a very rich mine. Cannons and anchors are there fabricated ; of the latter of which a pretty considerable number are exported to the Indies. The value of the exports from Providence was—in 1790, from the month of June, one hundred and thirteen thousand, two hundred and thirty-one dollars. . . . in 1795, one million forty thousand and five—and, for the first six months of 1796, four hundred and thirteen thousand, nine hundred and twenty-four.

This great increase in the value of the exports is not here, any more than elsewhere, a true criterion of their quantities ; for, although I have not had time to take from the custom-house books an abstract of the different articles year by year, and to compare their estimated values, I know that the tonnage of the port of Providence has increased only in a very small proportion ; since it amounted in 1792 to eleven thousand two hundred tons, and does not at present exceed fourteen thousand five hundred. It is true, that, during the last year, the shipping of that port suffered losses to the amount of eleven or twelve hundred tons by shipwreck, captures, &c.

The commerce of Providence is carried on with the East and West Indies, Denmark, the north of Germany, and the coasts of Africa. Some of her vessels trade to France ; but the number of these is very small. They usually carry thither tobacco and train-oil : during the last two years they carried rice, meal, salt beef, raw hides, and shoes for the army—Providence and Newport carry on no trade with England ; whatever British commodities they want, they purchase at New York and Boston.

To the value of the exports from Providence may



be added about eight hundred thousand dollars in specie which are annually sent out for the trade with India and China; since that money may truly be called the produce, inasmuch as it is the fruit of the produce, of the state.

The principles on which are grounded the assessment and the levying of taxes in the state of Rhode-Island are essentially the same as they were at the period of the first settlement of the colony. . . . Those taxes are a capitation, a tax on real and personal property, from which a law of 1795 excepts, as untaxable articles, all furniture (not including plate), implements of agriculture, workmen's tools, and a quarter of the capital employed in trade on sea. The raising of the taxes rests with each town or township, which is responsible to the state-treasurer for the proportion of the taxes assigned to it by the legislature. The ratio is regulated by a general valuation made from time to time, . . . The last three valuations took place in 1767, 1778, and 1795. On the first of those occasions the taxable property was valued at seven millions three hundred and seventy-one thousand one hundred and eighty-six dollars; . . . and, in 1795, at fifteen millions five hundred thousand dollars. It appears that this augmentation in the quantum of taxable property is attributable to the increase of the capitals employed in trade, more than to any other cause. . . .

The capitation-tax is settled in the proportion of sixpence for every thousand pounds rated to the state. The towns may nevertheless set aside this tax, provided they contribute their quota toward satisfying the public demand in some other mode. The town of Providence, for instance, levies her proportion of it only on movable and immovable estates.

The taxes of the state of Rhode-Island, as I have already observed, amount only to six thousand pounds, or twenty-thousand dollars, and are regularly paid. The expence of the civil list is but five thousand dollars. . . . The state owes about ninety-eight thousand dollars, and has, for the discharge of that sum, no other resource than taxation. By the decision of the commissioners appointed to settle the accounts between the United States and the individual states, Rhode-Island is creditor to the Union to the amount of two hundred and eighty-nine thousand six hundred and eleven dollars.

### 1801. President Josiah Quincy.

Josiah Quincy (1772-1864), of Boston, was first noted as a leader of the Federalists in Congress. He was urgently opposed to the Embargo and the war with England, and his speech in opposition to the admission of Louisiana into the Union is, according to Hildreth, "the first announcement on the floor of Congress of the doctrine of secession." From 1823 to 1828 Mr. Quincy was Mayor of Boston.

In 1829 he was chosen President of Harvard College, and held the position until 1845. He introduced important changes into the curriculum and the administration of the University. This extract is taken from his "Diary kept on a Journey through South-eastern New England," and is published in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d Series, IV. 123-126.

*June 4.* The next day we proceeded to Providence, having dined at Wrentham, and stayed an hour at Pawtucket. In general the road is rough and hilly, and the prospects little various or cultivated. Woodland, pasturage, and meadows chiefly occupy the face of the country. The houses which we passed evidenced neither thrifty nor ingenious proprietors; except, indeed, those in Wrentham and its vicinity. The falls at Pawtucket are the objects on this route most worthy the attention of a traveller. They are formed by several ledges of rocks extending in broken lines across the bed of the river. The centre layers, being nearly at right angles with each other, collect the waters from both sides of the stream and dash them down to a point. This, which is called "the Pot," is of immense depth, whence the flood is eternally rising in rage and foam. In the Eighth of a mile the whole descent is about Sixty feet. A bridge, which is erected over the centre ledges, hides much of the grandeur of the scene. This is also diminished by the diversion of the water from the falls, occasioned by numerous canals, cut for the use of manufactories, erected on each side of the river. These consist chiefly of Iron, paper, and cotton works, in the last of which a very complicated and ingenious machinery performs all the requisite labour. We found the proprietor very cautious of admitting strangers to view its operations, nor would he grant us the privilege until he had received satisfactory assurances that we were as ignorant and unconcerned about every thing relating to the cotton manufacture as he could wish. All the processes of turning cotton from its rough into every variety of marketable thread state, such as cleaning, carding, spinning, winding, etc., are here performed by machinery operating by Water-wheels, assisted only by children from four to Ten years old, and one superintendent. Above an hundred of the former are em-

ployed, at the rate of from 12 to 25 cents for a day's labour. Our attendant was very eloquent on the usefulness of this manufacture, and the employment it supplied for so many poor children. But an eloquence was exerted on the other side of the question more commanding than his, which called us to pity these little creatures, plying in a contracted room, among flyers and coggs, at an age when nature requires for them air, space, and sports. There was a dull dejection in the countenances of all of them. This, united with the deafening roar of the falls and the rattling of the machinery, put us into a disposition easily to satisfy our curiosity.

*June 5.* A violent storm prevented us from seeing as much of Providence as we intended. Having both of us been in this place before, and finding our lodgings not very commodious, we proceeded, in the rain, about Ten miles, to Warren. The road lies through a well-cultivated country, interspersed with two or three thick woods, through which the traveller passes, and is made pleasant by a variety of fine prospects. Warren is situated upon a river of its name, which joins Providence river about two miles from the village. Everything about it bears the marks of industry, frugality, neatness and prosperity, very equally diffused. Accordingly, our Landlord, a very intelligent and communicative Yankee, assured us that the town had no poor to support, and that no one of its inhabitants was so far above his neighbors as to be called rich. This man, who was both tavern-keeper and carpenter, I found in deep political discussion with Mr. Fessenden, the schoolmaster, and Mr. Phillips, who was at once the principal village trader, its custom-house officer, Postmaster, and printer. Fessenden was not less oracular, nor solemn, in his responses, than his predecessor whom Goldsmith celebrates. The hammer and

the adze were motionless as he displayed before the master and the journeyman, in the workshop, "all he knew". This scene was the more pleasing to me as Fessenden's politics were sound, and as he appeared to be a worthy and well-principled man. He was polite, and offered to accompany me in viewing the Town. It is built upon two or three streets, about half a mile in extent, running parallel with the river, and upon others crossing these at right angles. The houses are of two stories, generally painted, and within appear remarkably clean and commodious. Rows of cherry-trees, planted in front of most of the houses, give the place an uncommon air of improvement and taste. The church and the Free-mason's hall are the only public buildings. The former is handsome, and the latter, having some gilded insignia of the craft at each of its ends, has more decoration than any other in the town. It is of two stories,—the upper destined for *the awful* secrets of the lodge, the lower for a town school. This was Fessenden's hobby, across which he was astride as soon as we were in sight of the house, and rode most cheerily until we turned our backs upon this deposit of his hopes. "I expect it will accommodate forty youth," said he, "of both sexes. It is to be called an Academy, and is to be under my direction and that of a preceptress, who I intend shall be the most accomplished female that can be procured from Boston". Upon this he gave me an insight into all the depth and extent of his plan of instruction, in all which it was plain the good man had worked up his imagination to view Warren in vision the seat of the muses, and himself as nothing less than high priest of Apollo.

There is sufficient depth of water in Warren river to float vessells of 150 Tons burthen, loaded. A considerable carrying trade is also supported, by the inhabitants, in the vessells built on this river.



*June 6.* From Warren to Bristol Ferry, a distance of Six miles, there is a constant succession of beautiful landscapes, combining the prospects of Providence and Warren rivers, the Islands they contain, and the country at a distance, all highly cultivated. Bristol, through which we passed, two miles from the ferry, is a flourishing place, and is the shire-town of a county of its name. It is situated on a bay formed by the waters of the Providence river, and includes within its boundaries Mount Hope, celebrated in the ancient history of our country as the residence of King Philip. Bristol carries on a considerable trade, of which that in slaves has not been the least successful, as several very elegant seats were pointed out for which, we were told, the owners were indebted to that traffic.

Bristol ferry is at the confluence of the rivers Taunton and Providence, which meet in Narraganset Bay, at the North end of Rhode Island. The ferry is half a mile wide, is well attended, and has good boats. Mount Hope lies towards the North West, and rises gradually, with a beautiful slope, from Taunton river. It is eleven miles from Bristol ferry to Newport, by the Eastern road. This passes nearly through the middle of the Island, and abounds with numberless fine views of it, of Narraganset Bay, on its East and West side, of Providence and Taunton rivers, and Mount Hope Bay. The roads are excellent, and the soil is rich and willing. All the wood upon this Island was cut off by the British during the war, so that there is at present none but what is of late growth. Marks of improvement are here rare. From the appearance of the buildings, one cannot refrain from believing, what is said to be the fact, that on this Island, everything has been, to say the least, stationary for thirty years past. Newport, situated at its Southern extremity, is scarcely upheld from decay. Providence, lying at the head of



navigation, has attracted from it the principal parts of the enterprise and wealth of the state, and has attained a superiority which, in consequence of its insular situation and distance from the country, Newport seems to despair of regaining.

We returned from Newport, by the same road, to Howland's ferry, which we crossed about sunset. This ferry is near the Northerly end of Rhode Island, and separates it from Tiverton. Narraganset Bay is in this place about a third of a mile in breadth. The relics of a fine bridge, twice carried away by the rapidity of the current and by worms, give a melancholy effect to the prospect.

## 1806. John Melish.

John Melish (1771-1822) was a Scotchman who came to the United States and travelled extensively. He published several works descriptive of the country, its resources and industries, and died in Philadelphia. The quotation given is taken from his *Travels in the United States, Great Britain, and Canada, in 1806-'11*, pp. 67-71 (London, reprint, 1818).

At 6 o'clock we reached Providence, where we saw a good deal of shipping, and I was surprised to find a vessel there of upwards of 900 tons burden. I was informed that she was in the East India trade, of which there is a considerable share at this port, and that there would be a sale of India goods next day.

The major, who had often travelled this way, con-

ducted me to a boarding-house, where having engaged lodgings, we went out to take a view of the town, with which he was well acquainted. The ground rises to a considerable elevation above the town, from whence we had a fine view ; and we returned to our lodgings highly pleased with the excursions of this day.

Providence is beautifully situated on the head of Narraganset bay, and is divided into two parts by the Providence river, over which there is a good bridge, with a draw in it, to allow vessels to pass. The west side of the town is low, but the east side rises, by a rapid ascent, to a considerable elevation. The number of inhabitants, in 1800, was 7614, and they are rapidly increasing.\* The public buildings are, a court-house, market-house, a public school-house, a baptist meeting-house, a quaker meeting-house, and three congregational churches. There is an extensive college situated on the hill, and commanding a fine view of the town, bay, shipping and country for many miles round. The building is of brick, with a slated roof, 150 feet long, 46 wide, and four stories high ; and contains lodgings for upwards of 100 students. It has a valuable philosophical apparatus, and a library containing upwards of 3000 volumes.

Providence has a pretty extensive shipping trade, and several manufactories are established in the town and neighbourhood, which are said to be in a thriving state.

The state [of Rhode Island] is divided into five counties and thirty townships, and the inhabitants amount to 69,122, including 380 slaves ; being about 45 to the square mile.

The country is well improved, abounding with towns, villages, and farm-houses. The chief towns are Providence and Newport, already mentioned. The others

\* By the census of 1810, they are 10,071.

are, *South Kingston*, situated on the west side of Narraganset Bay, nearly opposite Newport, and contains 3000 inhabitants. *Bristol* is pleasantly situated on the bay, about half way between Providence and Newport, and contains 1678 inhabitants. It has a little shipping trade. *Warren* is a flourishing little town, containing about 1600 inhabitants. It is on the west side of the bay, on the Warren River, and carries on a brisk coasting and foreign trade. *Little Compton*, *East Greenwich*, and *Compton*, are also growing towns. The state is supplied with good roads and bridges, some of which have been constructed on an ingenious plan, and at great expense. No canals have yet been made, but several are projected.

The farms are generally well cultivated, and produce Indian corn, rye, barley, oats, wheat, (though not enough for home consumption), fruits in great abundance, and culinary vegetables. Butter, cheese, and cyder, are made in great quantities, and of a superior quality.

The manufactures are cotton and linen goods, bar and sheet iron, steel, nails, anchors and other iron work for shipping, sail-cloth, paper, rum, &c. The cotton manufacture is extending, and I was informed that some of those engaged in it were doing well; but it is yet in its infancy, and, being subject to a competition with the organized manufactures of Britain, it must be attended with a considerable degree of inconvenience, and perhaps some risk.

This state is very favourably situated for commerce, of which it has a large share. The exports are grain, flaxseed, lumber, horses, cattle, beef, pork, fish, poultry, onions, butter, cheese, spirits, and cotton and linen goods. The value of exports is about 1,000,000 dollars annually. The imports are European and India manufactures, West India produce, and logwood.

The inhabitants of the country are generally proprietors of the farms they cultivate, and, having no land-

lord to make their *bow* to, nor rent to pay, they must be independent. The inhabitants of the towns are merchants, manufacturers, mechanics, seamen, and fishermen. The lands are not entailed, and hence there is no aristocracy; but independence is easily attained by labour. There is no distinction made on account of religious opinions; but every man worships God in any way his conscience dictates, without interfering with his civil rights. There are several benevolent and useful societies in the state, among which may be noticed one "for the abolition of the slave trade, and for the improvement of the African race." The state of education is said to be considerably behind that of the other New England states, but is improving. The chief seminary is the college at Providence, already mentioned; and there is an academy at Newport, under good regulations, besides various seminaries throughout the state.

The state legislature consists of a governor, deputy governor, ten senators, and a representative from each township. They are chosen by the people twice every year, and they hold two sessions annually.

## 1807. Edward Augustus Kendall.

Kendall (1776c-1842) was an Englishman interested in colonial enterprises and in colonial trade. He wrote on various subjects, and was identified with the cause of popular education in England. In 1807-'8 he travelled through the northern parts of the United States, and in 1809 published at New York an account of his wanderings in three volumes. The extract

given here is taken from his *Travels through the Northern Parts of the United States*, Vol. II, p. 1 *et seq.* (New York, 1809).

Most of the streets in Newport and Providence are paved. Those of the latter lie both on the east and west banks of the Wanaspatucket, which, after spreading itself into a broad bason behind the village, where it receives the Moshasic, and afterward joins the Patucket, by a narrow channel. Over this channel is a bridge, formerly called Weybossett bridge, on account of a hill of that name, on the east bank, and to the foot of which it reached. The hill is now levelled, and the common name is the Great bridge. Its length is a hundred and sixty feet, and its width twenty-two. There is a very pleasant ride, around the bason of the Wanaspatucket, in which, after leaving a street which runs to the westward, where a large number of new buildings are now erecting, and beyond which is a small-pox hospital, the road leads through woods and meads, ornamented with water, and having the buildings of the village in the background. That part of the village, which is on the west of the bridge, is called Westminster. On the eastern side of the river are the older and more populous streets, and all the principal public buildings.

In the lower or main street is a large anabaptist church, eighty feet square, with a lofty spire, and a bell cast in the town of Scituate; and near this church is a large and well-built quaker meeting-house. Besides these, there are three congregational churches, and one church of the church of England. In the design of one of the congregational churches, built on high ground in the upper street, much attention has been paid to beauty, and the effect produced is very pleasing.

The west end of the cathedral church of Saint Paul, in the city of London, is the model on which it is formed, and from which as much of the pomp of architecture has been imitated, as the small dimensions of the copy may have justified.

The state-house is a handsome building, seventy feet in length, by forty in breadth. In the chamber of the representatives, as well as that devoted to the courts of justice, is a large gallery, for the accommodation of strangers; and in the council-room is a picture of General Washington, copied, like the others that I have mentioned, by the original painter. These pictures, with their frames, have generally cost the governments, by which they have been purchased, from nine to twelve hundred dollars each. In the same room, is a town and country library, supported by subscription.

Upon ground still higher than that on which is the church whose architecture I have praised, is Brown University, formerly called Rhode Island College, a plain building, of a brown-coloured brick, three hundred and fifty feet in front, forty-six in depth on each wing, and sixty-six in the centre. The number of chambers for students is forty-eight, and there are ten large public rooms. At the commencement for the present year, there were twenty-six graduates. The expenses of education are at least as low at this college, as that of Connecticut.

On the same level with the university are several handsome private houses, as there are also in the low grounds, lying between the village and the Patucket.

Over the Patucket, on the road to Rehoboth, a bridge is at present building; meanwhile, the communication is by a rope-ferry.

The republic abounds in incorporated banks, and Providence alone has three. Two, in Warren and Bristol have been mentioned, and there are two in



Newport ; there is also one in a town called Westerly, one in Smithfield, and one in Gloucester.

Patucket, a village four miles to the northeast of Providence, and seated on the river whence it derives its name, is dependent wholly on manufactures. This settlement has grown up on the banks of a cataract, called Patucket Falls, affording situations for very numerous mills. Here, in 1760, according to the traveller, whom I lately cited, there were *two or three mills* ; but so long ago as 1796, there were three anchor-forges, one tan-mill, one flower-mill, one slitting-mill, three snuff-mills, one oil-mill, one cotton-manufactory, three fulling-mills, two machines for cutting nails, and a clothier's works, in which the shearing was performed by water ; and the number and extent of these establishments are now increased.

## 1810. Henry A. Howland.

Henry A. Howland (1806–1896) was a prominent business man of Providence, and was one of the first to advocate the cause of temperance, in the '40s. He took considerable interest in city politics, and was a member of many of the educational and business institutions of Providence. The following extract is taken from his "Reminiscences," published in the *Narragansett Historical Register*, VI. 111.

The vicinity of Weybosset street was the scene of my earliest years. Butler's wharf (now Hay street), was on the west side of it. . . .

Long Wharf (now Custom street), called so probably because it was the longest when first built, as Butler's and Peck's were much longer now. These wharves all extended to the channel, the river flowing on each side of them and to the north side of Pine street. Access from one wharf to another was by passing up and down from Weybosset street. The wharves on the east side were separated in the same way.

There was then no South Water street extending the whole length of the river, no Dyer street on the West Side, no Pine street open but little below Richmond street, Eddy street was only on Eddy's Point where the main business was ship building. The largest ship yard was where the steam cotton mill now stands. All the area between the Steam mill, Richmond street and the northerly side of Pine street, was covered by the tide water and to go to Eddy's Point from Weybosset bridge, we had to go up to Richmond street and down that street, or take a boat and sail to the Point. All the ship builders and others were the owners of boats and would skull or row across to Market Square to get supplies, as that was the only market for meats and country produce. Dorrance street was then only from Weybosset street to the river, its only name that we knew was Muddy Dock. In the centre of it the tide flowed and a bridge was over the side-walk with an iron rail on each side under which the surface water ran from the street.

Muddy Dock did not look in the old days as if it would be ever graced and flanked by a seven storied hotel costing about a million of dollars, the popular Opera House and the handsome spacious Masonic building. Where the latter building stands there was a neck of land built upon the shore on which was erected the Second Baptist Church, (now the Central). There was a stone wall back of the lot the whole width

of it, against which the tide flowed. On the side of it to about the centre of what is now Eddy street, the tide covered a gently sloping sandy shore where in the then pure river water, the rite of baptism by immersion was observed. . . .

In 1810, there were but few stores on Weybosset Broad or Westminster streets. Broad ran to the junction of High and Pawtuxet streets. Pawtuxet street was the main road to the place. It is now the continuation of Broad street.

All the shops for dry goods were on the west side of North Main street, which was known as Cheapside. About 1820, the first lower part of a dwelling house on Westminster street was altered for the sale of dry goods, and occupied by Capt. William Russell, who was a favored dealer in that business for many years. Capt. Russell was followed by others in the same business till old Cheapside was deserted by its noted trade and name. Now spacious blocks of buildings for business purposes, take the place of the family residences and the yearly rent would more than purchase all the estate in 1810.

The family dwellings, on Broad and Weybosset streets, have also mainly been given up for business purposes. Large blocks built of stone and brick now cover the sites of the former homes and gardens. . . .

Where the Arcade now stands on the west half of the south end, Benjamin and Charles Dyer had a brick building used by them as a drug and medicine store. The east half of the Arcade lot was a part of the Butler estate, with the family residence in the rear. The house was a very common two-story building of wood with a large yard in which one or more cows were kept when home at night from the pasture, and the spare milk was sold to the neighbors. Many families owned cows then which were driven off to not far distant pastures and returned at night. . . .

Whitman's Block, at the junction of Weybosset and Westminster streets, was a noted feature as a building in my earlier years. It was one of the great things of the day, and was talked about all over the town and state as the Arcade building was twenty or more years later. With the Turks Head on a post as high as a lamp post, the junction became known by that name and is still retained after seventy years of its absence.

Whitman's Block was used for family tenements with the exception of one store at its junction.

## 1812. Henry Cogswell Knight.

Mr. Knight (c. 1788–1835) was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and graduated at Brown University in the class of 1812. He was ordained into the Episcopal Church, but was never settled over any parish. He published several volumes of poetry, a volume on the South, and two volumes of sermons. He was a keen observer of men and things, and is quoted as saying, respecting his own somewhat vacillating career, that he "could not find the right branches of the tree of knowledge by which to climb up." While in college he wrote a series of eleven letters to the "Rhode Island American," which have been collected and annotated by Mr. William R. Staples, of Providence (1866).

The volume is entitled *A Glance at the Town of Providence in 1812*. The quotation given is taken from Chapter IV. *Of Signs*.

Providencee river runs through the town near enough north and south for my purpose ; and on the east side runs Main street parallel with it ; at about twenty, thirty, or forty rods distance of gradual rise from the water, runs Baek street parallel with Main street. These two, together with Westminster and Weybosset streets, which diverge westerly from the market, form the four eardinal streets of this busy town. . . . On the right hand side of the street [Main street] [I notice] the signs of three leather-workers almost contiguous to each other. The first obtrudes upon the eye a *saddle*, painted upon a swing board ; . . . The next soothes the mind with a *milk-white lambkin*, carved and elevated upon a pedestal ; . . . The last offers you a *couchant reindeer*, with branching antlers ; . . . we approach near the Baptist meeting house ; — there . . . on the left side, an apothecary has perched over his door a *purblind owl*. . . . near the market on eheapside, you espy a *purple cluster of grapes* suspended over the door of an English goods shop. . . . Glance . . . across the street and there is *nature herself*—a *lion pounding in a mortar*. . . . cross over the bridge, and see what there is upon a pillar near the post-office ;—ah ! the Turk's Head—as very like the Grand Turk, I am told, as is the statue at India-Point bridge like our good old Captain Washington. . . . Cross over into Weybosset street . . . when now what think you I see ? a neat little carved and gilded *Rhinoceros*, cruelly suspended by his baek before the door of a groeer. . . . You observe near the post-office, whither we have returned, a suspended *hive of bees* ;—this is also above the door of a groeer.

## 1818. Henry Bradshaw Fearon.

Fearon was a London surgeon, who was sent by thirty-nine English families to the United States, in 1817, to ascertain what part of this country, if any, would be suitable for their residence. He gave an account of his experiences, which Sydney Smith pronounced exaggerated in its views of vices and prejudices. The following extract is taken from this *Narrative of a journey of 5000 miles through the Eastern and Western States of America*, 2d ed., pp. 98, *et seq.* (London, 1818.)

On entering PROVIDENCE, the capital of Rhode Island, I was much pleased with its beauty. In its appearance, it combined the attractions of Southampton and Doncaster. There are manufactories in the neighborhood. On that account I took up my abode at Chapotan's Inn until the 11th.

. . . . .  
Here is an excellent market-house, a *workhouse*, four or five public schools, an university with a tolerable library, a public library, and an hospital. Several of the churches are very handsome ; they, as well as many private houses, are built of wood, painted white, with green Venetian shutters, presenting a neat elegance very superior to our smoky brick buildings. I have not seen a town in Europe or America, which bore the appearance of general prosperity equal to Providence. Ship and house-builders were fully occupied, as indeed were all classes of mechanics. The residents are native Americans. Foreign emigrants seem never to think of



New England. Rent and provisions are much lower than at New York.

At Pawtucket, four miles from Providence, are 13 cotton manufactories ; six of which are on a large scale. They are not the property of individuals, but of companies. I visited three of these. They had excellent machinery ; not more than one half of which was in operation. The articles manufactured are the same as described at Fishkill [viz. the coarser cotton cloths]. Children from six to ten years of age, of both sexes, are paid 6s. 9d. per week ; ditto, 11 to 16, 10s. per week ; women, 12s.; men, 27s. to 31s. 6d. Very few of the latter are employed. Several of the manufactories of this place are situated on a fine fall of water, 50 feet in length, and passing through several chasms in a rock which extends across the river. The scenic effect of the fall is most materially injured by the situation of Pawtucket bridge.

To a labouring man who accompanied me through the manufactories, I gave half a dollar. I remarked that he addressed men of similar appearance to himself by the titles of "major," "captain," and "colonel." The population of this village is very trifling, yet it has "TWO BANKS !" The persons employed at all the manufactories combined, are not equal in number to those at *one* of moderate size in Lancashire. A considerable portion of weaving is done by women, who have or live in farm-houses. They receive  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per yard for  $\frac{3}{4}$  wide stout dark gingham ; an article which is sold at  $13\frac{1}{2}$ d. wholesale, and 15d. retail. These female weavers do not in general follow the occupation regularly ; it is done during their leisure hours, and at the dull time of the year. Some, who have no other means of support except service (which is unpopular in America) lodge with farmers, and give half the produce of their labour for their board and lodging.

The Pawtucket manufacturers have shops or stores in Providence. On their doors a board is affixed, "Weaving given out." During a conversation with a proprietor of one of these establishments, a woman came in, who, from her independent (though not impudent) air, I supposed must be a customer. His address to her, "I'll attend to you directly," confirmed my opinion. She replied, "I want work, Boss, I guess, for Harriet Angel." He immediately called to his assistant, "Where is that work, for Miss Angel."—What would a starving Manchester *weaveress* say to this? and how would Sir Robert Peel feel if addressed in the true language of honest independence?

## 1821. President Timothy Dwight.

Dr. Dwight (1752–1817), who in his day was almost the pope of Federalist and Congregational New England, was president of Yale College from 1795 to 1817. His administration marked an epoch in the development of the college. In 1795 he began the practice of making long journeys throughout New England, and of writing elaborate accounts of them. When his eyes failed, his students of the senior class asked permission to supply their place, by writing in turn from his dictation. Thus came into existence the volumes of his *Travels in New England and New York*. The following passages are taken from the New Haven edition of 1821, II. 29–35.

Providence is built on the Western side of Pawtucket river, in two divisions; one on the Eastern, and the

other on the Western side of a cove, which is an arm of that river. The site of the Western division is a slope, gradually rising from the cove ; that of the Eastern is the narrow base, and the side, of a lofty hill, which runs between the cove and the river to the point of their junction. The two principal streets on the Eastern side, pass, one at the bottom, and the other at a little distance along the side, of this hill, until they terminate at the river. The principal street on the Western side is a part of the great road towards New-London and Hartford. Those, on the East, are crossed by several others nearly at right angles.

Many of the houses in this town are ancient, and ordinary ; many more are modern buildings, and would be called good houses in a New-England village ; although inferiour to a multitude of houses in such villages. A small number are of a character superiour to this ; and three or four are splendid.\*

The public buildings in Providence, are a College ; three Presbyterian, one Episcopalian, and two Baptist Churches : a Friends' meeting-house ; a court-house ; a gaol ; a work-house ; and a market.

The Baptist church is a very good building, with an uncommonly handsome steeple : too high, however, for the body of the Church. Its situation is disadvantageous : the hill, before mentioned, rising suddenly behind it, and making it appear lower than it really is.

The Presbyterian church on High-street is located with taste ; and, both within and without, is one of the handsomest churches in New-England. It is fronted with two towers ; each crowned with a well appearing cupola.† . . . . .

\* Since this was written, a great number of good houses have been built in Providence, of which a considerable proportion may be justly styled elegant. Two new churches, an Episcopal, and a Presbyterian, both honourable to the inhabitants, have lately been erected. Few towns in New-England have been more improved in their appearance.

† In the year 1814, this church was consumed by fire.

The Court-House is a decent building.

The morals of Providence are probably superiour to those of any other town in this State. The usual order of things, with respect to morality, seems here to be inverted. In most other States the country is more virtuous than the city. Here, a general, and honorable, regard to morality, and a general performance of its duties, such as is found in other respectable towns of this country, appears to prevail. Many years have not elapsed since the market, the street, and the wharves, were little less frequented on the Sabbath, than on other days. You will remember, that the Sabbath in this state is neither regarded by the laws, nor sanctioned by any general religious observance. We saw a few carts entering the town ; but were informed, that the number had yearly decreased for a considerable time, and that the inhabitants were strongly, as well as generally opposed to this indecent intrusion.

The present town of Providence contained in 1790, 6380 inhabitants ; in 1800, 7614, and, in 1810, 10,071.

Providence is the third town in New-England, in its population and commerce, and probably the first as to manufactures. The inhabitants, like those of Salem, have been obliged to combat many disadvantages, but in the end have surmounted them with a spirit of industry, enterprise, and perseverance, rarely displayed. The country around them, particularly in their own State, is generally so lean, as scarcely to supply its inhabitants with food. But the merchants by their activity and prudence have engrossed, to a considerable extent, the custom, and produce, of the neighboring regions of Massachusetts, and Connecticut. They have, also, engaged in several kinds of manufactures with a spirit, and success, unrivalled in this country.

## 1822. Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse.

Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse (1754–1846) was a physician of Newport, who aided in establishing the Medical School at Harvard, and then became professor of medicine there. He was also professor of natural history at Rhode Island College (Brown University), from 1784 to 1801, and gave, in the State House at Providence, the first course of lectures upon that science in this country. He was prominent in introducing vaccination into America. In his political views Dr. Waterhouse was an enthusiastic Jeffersonian. The following extract is taken from a letter to Jefferson, written at Newport in 1822, and printed in the *Publications* of the Rhode Island Historical Society, New Series, II. 177, 178.

After thus boasting of our great men, before the braggadocia spirit evaporates entirely, I must speak of the Island itself. I have seen not a little of other countries, but I never saw any Island that unites finer views, rendered pleasant by variety, of hill & vale, rocks, reefs, beaches, Islands & perennial ponds than this. Until I saw other parts of the world I did not sufficiently appreciate this. I have always heard it praised by strangers, and long remember it the resort of the opulent invalid, since I can remember anything, but I never duly estimated its beauties until this visit; when I have explored it from shore to shore in every direction, & cease to wonder at its celebrity. Before the discovery of our mineral springs Rh. Island was in one view the Bath of the American world, & the lumber

room of the colonial faculty. What they could not cure they threw in a heap here. This and the "Redwood Library" gave it both a literary & a genteel air ; and rendered it the best bred society in N. England. But—alas !—how changed !—The British destroyed, for fuel, about 900 buildings, to be sure the poorer sort ; yet it has never recovered the delapidation. The town of Providence has risen to riches & elegance from the ruins of this once beautiful spot ; while Newport resembles an old battered shield—Its scars & bruises are deep & indelible. Commerce, & all the Jews are fled. The wharves are deserted & the lamp in the synagogue is extinct ; and the people are now so poor, that there are not more than 10, or a dozen people who would have the courage to invite a stranger to his table. General Dearborn has demonstrated to me that it never can be a safe naval station ; and that it can never be so fortified as to resist a powerful attack by sea. They must therefore stick to the spirit of their ancient motto—*In Domino speravimus.*

## 1826. Anne Royall.

Mrs. Royall (1769–1854) was born in Virginia, stolen by the Indians when a child, and kept a captive for fifteen years. She married a Captain Royall. Subsequently she moved to Washington, and published a small weekly paper called the "Washington Paul Pry." John Quincy Adams described her as going about "like a virago-errant in enchanted armor, redeeming herself from the cramps of indigence by the notoriety of her eccentricities and the forced currency they gave to her



publications." John W. Forney says, "She was the terror of politicians, and especially of congressmen. I can see her now tramping through the halls of the old capitol, umbrella in hand, seizing upon every passer-by and offering her book for sale." She wrote several books of travels in the United States, and one novel.

The quotation given is taken from her *Sketches of History, Life, and Manners in the United States*, pp. 368, 369. (New Haven, 1826.)

Providence is a very romantic town, lying partly on two hills and partly on a narrow plain, about wide enough for two streets. It is divided by Providence River (over which there is a bridge) on both sides of which, on the margin, are the principal houses of business. On one side of the river the ascent is sudden, on the other, it is gradual. It contains 14 houses for public worship, a college, a jail, a theatre, a market-house, 8 banks, an alms-house, part of which is a hospital, and 12,800 inhabitants. The churches are very splendid, and the jail is tolerable; but the poor-house does not deserve the name, and the hospital is a wretched abode, disgraceful to the town. I found about half a dozen prisoners in the jail, in all, some of whom were confined for debt. These, however, bore the marks of humane treatment. The poor-house is in an old building in the most unwholesome part of the town. There were about twenty paupers in it, the dirtiest set of beings I ever saw. I found five maniacs in the hospital, lying on straw upon the floor, which looked as though it had not been swept or washed for years. The citizens, however, are engaged in measures to render these establishments more comfortable. Providence is mostly built of wood, though there are many fine

brick edifices in it. The Presbyterian church is ornamented with a handsome dome and collonade, and is one of the finest buildings in the United States. The streets are wide and regular, and most of them paved, with handsome side-walks, planted with trees. It is a very flourishing beautiful town, and carries on an extensive trade with the East Indies. They have, besides this, a number of coasting vessels employed in the cotton business. The town of Providence alone owns 6 cotton factories, 2 woollen factories, 12 jeweller's shops, where jewelry is manufactured for exportation. It has also, many iron foundries, where those iron looms for the cotton factories are made; likewise a bleaching establishment, where 12,000 yards are finished per day. It employs 60 hands and has a capital of \$40,000. Rhode-Island is the greatest manufacturing state in the Union, having, at least, 150 cotton factories, and the whole business of these is done by Providence. Besides those articles, Providence manufactures various others. The citizens are mostly men of extensive capital. The firm of Brown & Ives is among the greatest in New England. I made several attempts to visit Brown University, but was finally disappointed. I called several times at the house of the President, but never found him in. The buildings stand on the highest part of the town, in a beautiful situation, but they are not extraordinary, either for size or architecture. I saw but two old brick buildings, with much of the glass broken out of the windows, and with every appearance of neglect and decay; and, worse than all that, I saw a specimen of the politeness of the students, which reflects no great honour upon the Institution. I am told it is well endowed, has a president and 10 professors, and averages 150 students. By a rule, the president and a majority of the trustees must be of the Baptist religion. This sect is the prevailing religion of Providence.

*Manners and Appearance.*—The citizens of Providence are mild, unassuming, artless, and the very milk of human kindness. They are genteel, but not so refined as the people of Boston. Most of them are deeply and closely engaged in business, and they have not that leisure to improve by reading, which the Bostonians have; nor do they travel so much as the citizens of Salem. They are an industrious, enterprising people, and have all the hospitality and frankness of the New-Englanders. They are stout, fine looking men; the ladies, particularly, are handsome, and many of them highly accomplished. Both sexes are remarkable for plainness [of speech?], and have a very independent carriage.

### 1833. Thomas Hamilton.

Thomas Hamilton (1789–1842) was a Scotchman, and writer of some literary ability,—a younger brother of Sir William Hamilton, the metaphysician. He served as an officer in the Peninsular campaign, and in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. For many years he was a contributor to “Blackwood,” and is served with a special personal compliment in the “Noctes” (I.89). His novel, “Cyril Thornton” had a great reputation in its day. His book on America was popular, and has been translated into both French and German.

The extract quoted is taken from *Men and Manners in America*, pp. 80–83. (Philadelphia, 1833.)

On reaching the hostelry [at Providence], its external appearance was far from captivating. There

was no sign-board, nor did the house display any external symbol of the hospitality within. Below was a range of shops, and the only approach was by a narrow stair, which might have passed for clean in Rome, but would have been considered dirty in England. On entering, I stood for some time in the passage, and though I inquired at several members of the establishment, who brushed past me, whether I could have accommodation, no answer was vouchsafed. At length, advancing to the bar, I observed the landlord, who was evidently too busily engaged in mixing brandy and water for a party of smokers, to have any attention to bestow on a stranger like myself. . . . during a fortunate intermission in the demand for spirits, my inquiries were at length attended to, and satisfactorily answered. . . . I found that I could be supplied with a luxury I had not ventured to anticipate—a private parlour, communicating with a very comfortable bed-room. . . .

Providence is the capital of the State of Rhode Island, and contains about 25,000 inhabitants. It stands at the foot and on the brow of a hill, which commands a complete view of the fine bay. . . . The college appears a building of some extent, and is finely situated on the summit of a neighbouring height. The roads were so obstructed by snow, as to render the ascent a matter of more difficulty than I was in the humour to encounter; and so it was decreed, that Brown's College should remain by me unvisited. . . . The only building which makes any pretension to architectural display is the Arcade, faced at either extremity with an Ionic portico. Judging by the eye, the shaft of the columns is in the proportion of the Grecian Doric, an order beautiful in itself, but which, of course, is utterly barbarized by an Ionic entablature. I know not any thing in which the absence of taste in America is more signally displayed than in their archi-

ecture. . . . The guide-books declare that Providence has a good deal of foreign commerce. It may be so, but in the bay I could only count two square-rigged vessels, and something under a score of sloops and schooners.

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